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THE

LAST DAYS.

REV. JAMES C. CHASE.

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THE LAST DAYS:

OR,

THE CHURCH ENTERING INTO REST,

AND

ESTABLISHING THE MILLENNIUM.

Short Notes

ON

SOME OF THE PROPHECIES

OF

DANIEL, JOEL, MALACHI, ZECHARIAH, ISAIAH, THE PSALMS,

AND

THE REVELATION.

BY

REV. JAMES C. CHASE, M.A.

BIBLIOTHECA VNIVERSITATIS

Thy kingdom come on earth . . . . . as in heaven.—MATT. vi 10.

Children, it is the last time.—1 JOHN ii. 18.

We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.—ACTS xiv. 22.

LONDON:

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1875.

101. i. 221.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

"Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Him who was before appointed for you, even Jesus Christ, whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things; of the which times God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."—Acts iii. 19-21.

"Elijah indeed is to come; and he shall restore all things."—Matt. xvii. 11.

THE LAST DAYS.

The Scriptures are a treasury, containing many exceeding great and precious promises, the fulfilment of all of which, though they exceed all that we can ask or think, is, nevertheless, designed for this present dispensation. But though the glory of these promises is such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart conceived, yet some preachers empty them of their meaning, and reduce them to almost nothing, by expounding them as if they referred only to the past and present experience of Christians. Thus these preachers persuade many that the Church has long ago attained to the highest standard of spiritual excellence now possible for her. But instead of being thus divinely perfect, does she not rather resemble the Church of Corinth, which, being divided into parties, St. Paul pronounced to be therefore carnal, to be walking as men, as persons destitute of the Spirit? Therefore he fed

them with milk, not with meat; for he tells them they were not able to bear it. But the divisions of our churches have long been stereotyped; and now in the Church of England it is sought to stereotype still further divisions. The result is that the whole Church of Christ is being fed, not with pure milk, but with a mixture thereof with water; while in the Church of England the action of some, with regard to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is nothing else than a repetition of the worship of the golden calf at the foot of Mount Sinai. Though, however, the Church of our day only too closely resembles that of Corinth, yet is she not too often flatteringly assured that she is fully prepared for the coming of the Bridegroom, and that He may possibly come this very night, and take her to heaven? But may we not in all sobriety of mind ask the question, Is she so thoroughly prepared for the Advent? Does she at all resemble the picture of, as we may call it, the Advent Church, as that picture is drawn in Scripture?

But another and most important question may also be asked, Has the Church accomplished half, nay, not half, but a hundredth part, of the work assigned to her in the present dispensation? She has not. In her present feeble, infantile, carnal state she is not capable of attempting it; nor does she even know what lies before her.

Therefore, instead of putting on her strength, girding herself for her glorious labours, and arming for the evil day—the fearful coming struggle with the powers of wickedness in the heavenly places, she is selfishly hoping that the next hour may end her conflict, and witness her rapture into the heavens to meet her Lord in the air; and then that He himself will do her unaccomplished work, or give it into the hands of another than herself.

But if the Church is in a babe-like state, what ought she long ago to have become, so as to have been fitted for her duties? and what is the work which, in consequence of her past lethargy, still awaits her?

First, she is to grow and increase with the increase of God, that is, with an increasing measure of the Spirit in her, till each of her members attains to a perfect man, namely, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. This is the unity of the faith, and it is nothing else than the fulness of eternal glory. This, also, is "the kingdom of God" in us. But this kingdom is as if a man should cast wheat into the ground, and the seed should spring and grow up, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear, and last of all the ripe grain, the emblem of immortality. Then will come the harvest, preceded, however, by a few sheaves which form a

first fruit. But the Church has not yet advanced beyond the first of the four stages of her growth, as above represented. She has even been stunted in the very first stage of her spiritual life, sanctification. How then could she go on to glorification, the eternally purposed perfection of Adam's race? or how could she even advance to the intermediate stages, her sealing, and her illumination, or irradiation? Thus, for these eighteen hundred years has Jesus been waiting at the right hand of the Father for the sanctification and full salvation of His people.

But again, What is the glorious work in store for the Church, first, when she is irradiate as the sun; and, secondly, when she is fully glorified?

First of all, the irradiation of the first fruits will startle both those Christians who attain not to it, and all the world who behold it, and will plunge them into the great tribulation, called, "the wailing and the gnashing of teeth." Also all Israel, seeing the transfiguration of this part of the Church, will by it be moved to jealousy, and will wail because of it. But God will in due time remove this world-wide overwhelming tribulation, so that through the ministry of the shining ones all Israel may be saved, the unprepared ones of the former churches be restored, and a multitude which no one can number be converted out of all

nations, and kindreds, and tongues. A nation will be born in a day, and the number of the elect be completed.

Secondly, when the first fruits are fully glorified they become kings, and reign over all the peoples of the earth, except the Antichristian nations, who will be destroyed in the brightness of the Second Advent. Therefore, as soon as the glorified saints assume their kingdom and authority over the earth, the Antichristian nations will rage against them; they will imagine a vain thing, saying, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." Thus they will make war against the Prince of princes; but like a potter's vessel they will in a moment be dashed in pieces by the glorified part of the Church.

Such is the grace and glory which in the Word of God has been offered to every age of the Church in succession.

But some may say, "If this is to be the course which the Church is to pursue, it will take ages to attain to it." Nay, it will be done suddenly. If the Church would give up the world and the flesh as readily and as completely as the Israelites forsook Egypt, Christ would return to her in as short a time as He manifested His presence to Israel at Mount Sinai, namely, in the third month after they were come out of the house of bondage. Three years more would witness the accomplish-

ment of the number of the elect. Then, as Joshua was seven years in subduing the Canaanites, so in seven years more all enemies would be subdued to Christ, and He would reign from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.

But as soon as the Church has the presence of Christ with her, as it was with Israel in the wilderness, then, for her entrance thereinto, He will at once new-create the land of Eden and its heavens, to be the promised new land of the true Israel. Down to these new heavens and land he new Jerusalem will immediately descend, and become the eternal abode of the King of kings. At the close of the seven years God himself will come into His tabernacle to dwell with men. Then, therefore, the end is come; so the Son, having subdued all enemies, delivers up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all.

Thus, after the Church has reached her Mount Sinai, that is, her sanctification, then ten years will suffice to bring on the consummation of all things. But if the Church still cleaves to the flesh-pots of Egypt, another two thousand years, more disastrous than the last, may have to drag their dreary length; for Jesus will remain at the right hand of the Father till the Church arrives at her Mount Sinai. Yet He must be in the midst of her, as He was in the midst of Israel,

before she can begin that triumphant career which has been so long awaiting her; and up to our day has been waiting, alas, in vain.

CERTAIN PRINCIPLES.

There are many important principles in accordance with which the Scriptures must be interpreted, in order to their right exposition; but the only one which I shall here mention is this—to us at this moment the most important of all—that at the present time the promises of God to Israel, how many so ever they be, all belong, as they ever have, to the Church; and that the enjoyment of them is designed by God to be entered upon by the Church "in the last days;" whether the Church in those days shall consist of Israelites, or Gentiles, or of both united into one. Therefore whatsoever things are comprehended in the term "the kingdom of God," though even the sovereignty of the whole world is included in it, yet they are all set before the Church as the object of her pursuit, and as the prize to be attained by her in this dispensation, even though, as now, the Church consists only of Gentiles. How disastrous, therefore, both to the Church and the world, have been the low views so long entertained concerning the purposes of God with regard to our own age, which

is, in truth, "the time for the restoration of all things."

The system of interpretation to be here exemplified entirely spiritualizes, or rather, if the term may be used, celestializes, all prophecy; therefore it makes the whole so intensely literal, that he who runs may read. This intensity of the literality of Scripture receives absolute proof from the inspired applications of prophecy found in the New Testament, whenever it is written, "Thus was fulfilled." But now that the earthly and temporal things have been superseded by the heavenly and eternal, the literality above spoken of depends upon this, that in the beginning of the latter days. that is, of those ten years which immediately precede the Second Advent, the new heavens, and the new land of Eden, and the new Mount Zion, will be created; and that to them the heavenly Jerusalem will at once come down. For this new world the Church has to prepare herself. She must make herself ready to enter even now into these heavenly places by putting on her strength and beauty. In order to do this, she must be transfigured into the present image of Christ, not suddenly at a leap, but by being changed from glory to glory by the Lord the Spirit.

If all this be true, then it follows that in the latter days there will be upon the earth the new

and heavenly country, the new Mount Zion, and upon it the new Jerusalem. These are the "true places" spoken of in Scripture, and it is to them that all the prophecies which speak of the last days relate. Therefore, upon these heavenly places being thus established on the earth, the Scriptures which refer to the latter days will begin to be literally fulfilled; for there will be again upon the scene of action a literal land of Israel, a literal Mount Zion, a literal Jerusalem, a literal, but Gentile, Israel: all literal, but all heavenly: the real, not the typical. In these the Scriptures are to be fulfilled, and that with such an intenseness of literality, that both among the children of God, and among all the nations of the earth, apostate christendom excepted, two opinions on the subject will then be impossible.

AN OUTLINE.

It may tend to make the following exposition more readily understood, if I put before the reader an outline, or synoptical view, of the whole.

The last days are those which immediately precede the Second Advent. Their duration is about ten and a half years.

The principal now coming events foretold in Scripture are the following.

1. The first great prophetic event which is to take place in our day, is the going forth of the wise and foolish virgins to meet the Bridegroom. Connected with this event is the coming of Elijah, to prophecy among the nations of christendom, and so to prepare a people for the service of Christ, when He is again present with His Church, as He was with Israel in the wilderness. At the coming of Elijah the last days recommence. John was Elijah; but he being put to death before he had accomplished his work, Elijah must reappear.

In the last time there will be in the various churches not only wise and foolish virgins, but also apostates; that is, men who forsake the holy covenant, choose their own ways of worshipping God, and delight in their abominations.

2. The preparation of the servants of God above spoken of is the sealing of these persons out of all sections of the Church.

3. The first four trumpets are sounded immediately after this sealing.

4. Upon this follows the rising up of Christ from the right hand of the Father, and His coming to His Church in the fulness of His power. Then begin "the days of the Son of man"—"the day of Christ."

5. This presence of Christ is a secret one; and the only persons who are admitted into it are

those who were sealed. These having been admitted, the door is shut. The presence of Christ with the sealed ones, and their vision of Him, will be to them as a marriage feast. They are the wise virgins. Thus seeing the glory of Christ, they will begin to be transfigured before men, being changed from glory to glory. The foolish virgins, beholding this, will come and knock, asking admittance to the same state of blessedness.

6. While the foolish virgins are standing without, dismayed at the refusal they receive, the sixth seal is opened, and there is a great earthquake. The sun becomes black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon becomes as blood; for the old heavens and land of Eden now pass away, being burnt up. Then the new heavens and new land are created. The inhabitants of the world, stricken with terror at the signs which accompany the passing away of the old heavens and land of Eden, and precede the creation of the new, hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, saying, "The great day of wrath is come, and who is able to stand?" But the earthquake ceases, the smoke from the burning land passes away, and all is again bright and calm. The new creation is then begun, and, it may be, is completed in six days.

7. Immediately after the opening of the sixth

seal, the fifth trumpet is sounded. This ushers in the great and terrible day of Jehovah, called the Great Tribulation, the Hour of Trial, from which none on earth are exempted, but only the sealed ones.

8. The new creation being finished, and the holy city having come down upon the new Mount Zion, Jesus ascends thither, and enters the heavenly city, where He is set upon His throne as King, about eight or nine years before the Second Advent.

9. During the secret presence of Christ with the sealed ones, they began to be changed into the image of His glory; so that when He ascends Mount Zion, to be set there as King, they come forth from the feast "clothed with the sun." This is their illumination or irradiation. It is called by St. Paul "the coming in of the fulness of the Gentiles."

These illuminated ones have now three great works to perform.

(1.) The great tribulation having passed away, the foolish virgins are brought back into the Church.

(2.) All Israel are saved.

(3.) An innumerable multitude out of all nations are converted. These two latter bodies of saints constitute the man-child.

About three years before the Second Advent all

Israel, and the converted heathen, are gathered into the new and glorious land, where they await the Second Advent.

The restored foolish virgins, however, go not thither with the converts; for on account of their former unfaithfulness to the truth, they are, "in the middle of the week," given into the power of the little horn for a time, times, and half a time.

10. The sealed ones having done the work above ascribed to them, enter into a direct conflict with the devil and his infernal host. This is the war in Heaven. For it the sealed ones will need all the armour of God; but clothed therein they will get the victory. Satan will then persecute them, but as on eagles' wings they will fly from all parts of the earth to their own new land, which they will reach in safety.

11. Their flight takes place one week, that is, exactly seven years, before the Second Advent. For three and a half years they remain in the new land, being fed on its fruits, and being there secure from the presence of the serpent.

12. In the middle of the seven years, or week, they leave the land, ascend Mount Zion, and for three and a half years stand there with the Lamb, in the fulness of their eternal glory. On ascending Mount Zion they become kings, and the sovereignty of the whole world is given them,

old christendom alone excepted, it having by this time become Antichristian.

13. The nations who have now submitted themselves to the Church, or Mount Zion, at once bring all the converts of the sealed ones, both Israelites and Gentiles, into the new land, where, as the sealed ones had lately been, they also are fed on its excellent and comely fruits till the Second Advent. Hither also many of all the nations are continually coming to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts.

14. Just at the beginning of the week, after the dragon had been overcome by the sealed ones, he was wroth, and went to make war with the rest of her seed—that is with those who had been foolish virgins, and who, being a part of the nations of christendom, still live among them. To carry on this war, the devil gives to the eighth head of the beast the revived Roman imperial form of government, his own power, and throne, and great authority. Being thus truly inspired, though by an evil spirit, this head exalts himself, and proclaims that he is the true Messiah, God manifest in the flesh. This is but one step in advance of the Vatican decree of infallibility, by the reception of which the Papists have prepared themselves to believe "the lie" which the man of sin will utter. It is also but a step in advance of broad churchism, which is Christianity

without a Christ; that is, it is man self-sufficient, or self-deified. All the nations of christendom, therefore, being thus prepared for the coming of the Antichrist, will at once worship him. Thus we see that the papacy is not the Antichrist, but apostacy from gospel truth, which at last is developed into Antichristianity. But though all christendom will acknowledge the eighth head of the beast as God, and will therefore worship him, yet the saints who dwell among them will refuse so to do. Therefore, as soon as the beast rises to the full height of his dragonic power, which he does by the middle of the week, he makes war against these saints, and continues to do so up to the time of the Advent, that is, forty-two months. Thus we see, that in the last days there are three distinct classes of saints. 1. The sealed ones on Mount Zion. 2. Their converts in the new land. 3. "The rest of her seed," the saints in the midst of the Antichristian nations.

15. When the sealed ones, with Elijah at their head, had gained the victory in the war in heaven, and had fled to their land, Elijah himself went not thither with them. He put off his glory, clothed himself in sackcloth, and went a second time among the nations of christendom, to prophecy again amongst them for 1,260 days, that is, during the first half of the week. In the middle of the week the beast, or Antichrist,

having risen to the full height of his power, puts Elijah to death; then he makes war with the saints and overcomes them. At the end of the week he makes war with the Lamb, by invading the glorious land where the converts of the sealed ones now are. So he places his camp in the direction towards the glorious holy mountain.

16. As soon as the beast and his armies approach the holy mountain, Christ, with the sealed ones, the armies in heaven, appears out of the city, in manifested glory for the conspicuous overthrow of the Antichristian host.

17. As soon as the beast and his armies are destroyed, the resurrection of all the saints takes place.

18. The Lord Jesus then descends from heaven, attended by the whole body of the Church and the hosts of angels. The nations living on the earth are now brought before His judgment seat.

19. All things being now subdued to Christ, He reascends the holy Mount of Zion, with all His saints and angels; and entering in triumph the heavenly city on its top, He delivers up the kingdom to His Father.

20. A thousand years of righteousness and peace ensue. When they are ended, the nations rebel against God; but the rebellion is soon brought to an end, after which the reign of righteousness and peace is never interrupted.

It now becomes us to see whether the events above enumerated will give a fair solution to the prophecies contained in the Bible, whether they will remove the difficulties which beset all other systems of prophetic interpretation, and whether they will do this without introducing new and still greater difficulties. A universal agreement with Scripture is the only possible antecedent proof which can be given of the correctness of any exposition of the prophecies. The reader must judge for himself.

DANIEL.

THE book of Daniel contains five distinct prophecies. They all relate more or less to a long course of events, extending through a period commencing with the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and ending with the Second Advent. Each succeeding vision adds something to the knowledge previously communicated; but it must be observed that the subject matter of these prophecies is the succession and establishment, not of religions, but of kingdoms; and that the last in the succession is an eternal kingdom. But it must be deeply impressed upon our minds, that a kingdom can be established only "in Christ." The everlasting kingdom of God, therefore, can be established only in the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Holy Ghost. Those who possess not these can never reign permanently in the world. The Jesuits, that is, the Ultramontanes—and now all adherents of the papacy are such—for hundreds of years have been attempting the kingdom of the world; but

since they are destitute of the Spirit of God, and substitute for it a monstrosity of unrighteousness, they can never succeed in their design: as well might fire attempt to build a permanent city of wood, hay, and stubble. The honour and glory of a universal and everlasting kingdom is reserved for those whom the Ultramontanes, that is, the Jesuits, and their brothers, the Ritualists, the apostates of the last days, hate and deny, namely, the true Evangelical Church. But succeed and flourish as these united old and new apostates may for a time, their final overthrow will only be the more conspicuous.

The visions of the book of Daniel demand our attention before any others, because they form a grand outline, which may be filled in, and perfected, by the various predictions found in Moses, and in the Psalms, and in all the Prophets.

First we have the vision of an image made up of four metals, which severally represent the four empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. This last is said to have attached to it, at the time of the end, ten smaller kingdoms. When this union has taken place, there appears a stone, cut out without hands, which smites the image upon its feet, and causes the whole to disappear. The stone then occupies its place, and also fills the whole earth.

The stone cut out without hands is that part

of the Church which in the last days attains to glory. When thus seen, it will abolish all the kingdoms of the world, and establish a universal and everlasting kingdom of righteousness and peace. This vision does not notice any of the events which attend this glorious consummation, the one grand idea here brought before our minds.

The second vision consists of four beasts, which rise up in succession. These represent the four empires already named. The fourth beast at the time of the end has ten horns. Among these there comes up another, a little horn, which by its own power roots up three of the first horns; and in this horn are eyes like a man's, and a mouth speaking great things. While the horn is thus speaking, the thrones are placed, and the Ancient of Days sits. The beast is then slain, and his body given to the burning flame. When this is accomplished, one like the Son of Man is brought to the Ancient of Days; and to Him the Ancient of Days gives dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him, and that His should be an everlasting dominion.

The interpretation is thus given to Daniel. These four great beasts are four earthly kingdoms; but the saints of the high places shall receive the kingdom, and shall possess it for ever. The Ancient of Days, then, is Christ; the one brought

before Him is the risen and glorified Church, and the kingdom which He gives to her is that which He had just previously to her being brought to Him made perfect and complete by the destruction of the Antichrist. So all that the risen and glorified Church had to do was to receive the kingdom which was ready for her on her resurrection and glorification.

But Daniel is to learn yet more. So his vision of the fourth beast is still continued, and he sees the little horn acting in the fulness of his power, and speaking great things; making war with the saints, and prevailing against them till the Ancient of Days comes. Of this the interpreting angel tells the meaning. Thus Daniel not only learns that some of the saints of the high places, that is the saints who are for ever to dwell in the true holy places, the heavenly Zion, and the new Jerusalem, are to be persecuted and slain up to the very time of the advent of the Messiah; but he is also told how long this persecution of them is to continue, namely, for three and a half years. Therefore, dating backward from the Advent as our fixed point, we may say that the last persecution of the saints will begin B.A. three and a half years. But at the Advent the judgment sits, the beast is destroyed, and the kingdom of the whole earth is given to the Church. Thus we read: and the horn "shall speak great words against the

Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the high places, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion. And the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the high places, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and all dominions shall serve and obey them."

In Daniel's third vision we read of two beasts, the latter of which represents the kingdom of Greece. At the last it becomes divided into four parts, out of one of which there arises in the last days a little horn, which waxes exceeding great towards the south, and towards the east, and towards the land of beauty and glory, and to the host of heaven, and to their Prince. This horn is a king of determined countenance, and understanding dark sayings. He exercises mighty power, yet the power is not his own, but that of another: he destroys wonderfully, and prospers, and executes his purposes, and destroys the mighty and holy people. Last of all he stands up against the Prince of princes; but he is broken without hand, that is, by a power which is not of earth.

Here we have brought before our minds the same events as before, only with the additional information that a second beast also is engaged in

the persecution of the saints, and in the war with the Prince of princes; and that this latter exercises the power of another. We learn also that the two horns come to one and the same end.

Another important point is also told us, namely, that the time for the continuance of the horns which persecute the saints, up to the moment of the Second Advent is said to be 2,300 days, that is, six years, four months, and twenty days. Therefore these horns receive their power and wisdom seven months and ten days after the beginning of the week. We have already seen that their war with the saints begins three and a half years after the commencement of the week.

In this third vision, however, there is one other point which is of such vast importance to ourselves, that it imperatively requires our notice. It is said that the saints are given into the hands of the little horn because of their transgression against the daily sacrifice. It follows, then, that if some of the saints in the latter days are given into the hand of the Antichrist it is for a similar reason. The daily sacrifice or burnt offering, which was consumed by the fire of the brazen altar, represented our entire sanctification, and our consequent entire consecration to the service of God. Here the evangelical churches have failed. Justification by faith has been their great

and too exclusive doctrine; while they have not taught, or practised, the whole truth as to sanctification. Therefore they among them who repent not will be given into the hands of apostate Ritualists and Papists after that these have become the followers of the Antichrist. Many Evangelists, however, are now preaching the true doctrine of sanctification. Tens of thousands are embracing the views they teach. Such persons, then, will escape all those things which are coming on the earth, and will stand before the Son of Man at His secret presence.

In the fourth vision, the prophecy of the seventy weeks, or seventy sevens of years, the dates are a prominent point. Another prominent point, and one of which we have not heard before, is the eternal covenant of glory made with the Israel of God in Christ before the world began, and the confirming of this covenant with many by the Messiah himself for one week, or seven years, namely, the seven years next before the Second Advent. It is also again declared that the persecution of the saints shall begin in the middle of the week, and continue up to the consummation, when that which is determined shall be poured upon him who thus desolates the saints.

Here, therefore, we have now before us three distinct courses of events transacted during the

same period of seven years, namely, the confirmation of the covenant with many during the whole of that time; the acting of the desolator for six years, four months, and ten days of that time; and the persecution of the saints in the suppression of the public worship of God by the Antichrist during the closing three and a half years of the same. Thus we see two distinct classes of saints.

But what is this confirmation or fulfilment of the covenant? It is nothing else than the glorification, and the entering into rest, of many of the saints, as was set forth in paragraphs 5, 11 and 12 of the Outline. The covenant thus confirmed is fully described in verse 24 of this vision. Thus we learn the wondrous glad tidings, that during the last years of this dispensation many of the saints will be glorified on earth, and enter into rest, and possess the kingdom of the whole earth, old christendom alone excepted.

Comparing these visions together, it is clear that the year-day theory is absolutely false, and that the prophetical periods of three and a half years, forty-two months, 1,260 days, and seventy sevens, that is, seventy sevens of years, and one seven of years, mean exactly what the words naturally signify.

Let us now consider the fifth vision, as far as it relates to the last days. It seems to begin to

speak of the Antichrist in chapter xi. 29. In verse 30 this king is said to be roused to indignation against the holy covenant, that is, the covenant of chapter ix. 24, 27; therefore he will persecute all in his dominions who stand fast to it. So in verse 31 he is said to pollute the sanctuary of strength, to take away the daily sacrifice, and to place the abomination which maketh desolate. Here then is the suppression of the public worship of the true God throughout all christendom, and the enforced worship of some idol. The saints of course will not worship the abomination; but all Papists and all ritualistic apostates from Protestantism will do so. Those among the saints who have understanding will instruct many as to the real nature of this mystery of iniquity, this strong delusion which God will send upon all those who now believe not the truth. Thus many will be prevented from falling into this snare of the devil; while those who have apostatized from the faith of the Gospel will be overpowered by the delusion, and will believe the lie uttered by this impious king, that he is God Messiah; for, as is said in verses 36, 37, "he will exalt himself above every god; he will not regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women," that is, the true Messiah, "nor any god, for he will magnify himself above all." Therefore many will believe and worship

him; but the saints refusing to do this will have to "fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil, many days," namely, three and a half years, or 1,260 days.

But in verse 32 we read of other saints who "are strong and do;" that is, they carry out the purposes which God has put into their hearts, and enables them to effect. These are said to be "they who do know their God." Here again, as in the fourth vision, we see two classes of saints.

But a very different scene is now brought before our view. In chapter ix. 27, we read of a body of saints who were glorified; and in chapter xi. 32, we read of them as those "who do know their God, and do exploits." Now, however, in verse 41, we further read of the new and glorious land; and in verse 45 of the glorious holy mountain. Thus, therefore, we have distinctly brought before us "the new heavens and the new land" of Eden, and the glorious things connected with them. What then do we learn from this part of the prophecy? Clearly this; that the new heavens and the new land are in existence during the latter part of the last week; for in verse 41 the glorious land is said to be invaded by the impious king. Therefore this new land must have been created before this invasion took place. The act of its creation is not here spoken of; but the fact of its existence, and of the presence of the Messiah

therein, on the antitypical, the true Mount Zion, and in the new Jerusalem come down to earth, are clearly set forth, first, in the declaration that the little horn shall stand up against the Prince of princes; and secondly, when it is said that this wilful king shall invade the glorious land, and shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, toward the glorious holy mountain. The tidings from the east and from the north have troubled him. The ships of the northern Tarshish have gathered from the farthest regions of the earth some of the sons of the heavenly Zion into the new land. With these, therefore, the impious king is determined to make away. They are the seed of those who were sealed out of all the evangelical churches, now so hated by apostate Ritualists and Papists, that is, Jesuits. And though the apostates will at this time have become worshippers of the Antichrist, yet they retain all their former hatred; therefore they will readily join in the war. But they come to an end, and there is none to help them.

From chapter xii. 1, we find that, during some part of the previous history, Michael stands up; and that upon his so standing up there is a time of trouble to Daniel's own people; and that at that time all the living among them are delivered; that is, they are delivered from the power of the Antichrist. But this is only through their having

been "all saved," as was set forth in the Outline, paragraph 9.

But we also read that at this time many of the sleepers in the dust of the earth shall awake. Those who awake, awake to everlasting life; those who awake not are reserved for shame and everlasting contempt. This resurrection takes place immediately after the Antichrist comes to his end.

In verse 7 we again hear that by the end of the three and a half years the power of the holy people is completely scattered.

A further period of thirty days, making up 1,290 days, seems to be assigned to the invasion of the glorious land, and the destruction of the invading armies. Then a still further period of forty-five days for some purpose not mentioned. It appears that it is at the moment of the end of this last period that the resurrection of the saints takes place; for Daniel is then told expressly that he "shall stand in his lot at the end of the days." Therefore Daniel and the risen saints will have no part in the great transactions of the last days.

JOEL.

THE prophecy of Joel now claims our attention. The whole of it seems referable to the last days; for it speaks exclusively of the great and terrible day of Jehovah, which is to come at the close of the present dispensation. Now we have the direct testimony of St. Peter that this prophet spoke of the time of the end. The quotation from Joel in Acts ii. 16, and that from Moses in Acts iii. 22, prove that the whole of Scripture speaks on this one subject, "the last times." "Yea," says St. Peter, "all the prophets, as many as have spoken, have foretold of these days." If this be so, then we are in as great danger of suffering from the coming judgment as were the Jews to whom the apostle preached; for he, as well as Joel, blew a trumpet in Zion, and sounded an alarm in the holy mountain, and he also used the words of the prophet, "It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered" from the

threatened judgment. Thus this apostle also tells us that in the last days there are "escaping ones."

The second chapter of Joel begins with a solemn warning that the great day of Jehovah is near, and the prophet calls upon all the inhabitants of the land to tremble. But now this alarm concerns the spiritual Church of our day, as much as it concerned Israel at the time when it was first sounded in their ears, and when it was repeated by the apostle. This alarm, when it shall be again given, is itself the premonitory warning of the nearness of the great and terrible day of the Lord; but the signs which precede and accompany the setting in of that day are not; for when "they see the sign, then shall all the tribes of the earth wail." "The earth shall quake, the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining;" for God "will show wonders in the heaven and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jenovah come." These signs are even yet to appear, and all the wailing consequent thereon; for according to the words of Christ himself, it is when the whole of them are present that men shall see the sign, not of His speedy coming, but of His actual presence

in our heavens. Thus He is again with His Church as of old in the wilderness. In Matthew xxiv. 29, these wonders are expressly said to follow, not to precede, nor to accompany, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the consequent tribulation of the Jews in the treading of their city by Gentiles. Therefore the world has yet to witness them.

But how is the judgment, which constitutes the great and terrible day of Jehovah, spoken of? Under the figure of an innumerable flight of locusts, the prophecy referred originally to the army of the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar; and its victorious career is described as "a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning (just before day-break) spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after them, even to the years of many generations." Then it is said of this army that they shall mount every wall; that they shall run through the city; that they shall climb every house, and enter in at the windows like a thief. Such is Jehovah's army; and "His camp is very great; for he is strong who executeth His word; for the day of Jehovah is great and very terrible, and who can abide it? But," notwithstanding all this, "it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and

in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as Jehovah hath said, even in the remnant whom the Lord shall call" (verses 2, 9, 31). Thus it is clearly seen that, nothwithstanding the blast of the trumpet, and the sounding of the alarm, only a remnant of Israel would escape the judgment which was to be inflicted on the nation by the great army which God would send against them.

All this, however, now applies to us. At the present time the tribes of Israel are cast off; and the Gentile Church occupies their place. This Church having come into the possession of the promises has thereby also subjected herself to the threatenings; as we shall clearly see when we come to the Revelation (chapters viii. 13, and ix. 1-11), where Jehovah's army, under Joel's terrible figure of locusts, is again spoken of as coming against all the earth. There also, as in Joel, it is foretold that a remnant only shall be delivered.

All this, therefore, is now coming on the Gentiles. The great and terrible day is near; it will affect all mankind, except the remnant who are altogether to escape the judgment. God will give due warning of its approach. After that there will appear in the heavens the signs and attendants of the day of God. For as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days

of the Son of Man, the days of His secret presence, and of His great power to be exercised by His Church. While all was peaceful on the earth, and serene in the heavens, Noah sounded the alarm. Then, while all things yet continued as they were, he entered into the ark. God shut him in. These escaping ones now can no more hear the strife of unbelieving tongues without. For seven days longer the calm of nature continued. Then the heavens became black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. Now there was no escape. The door was shut, and in the outer darkness who could find it? Doubtless they cried, but there was none to hear. So in the last days, before the signs in the heavens and earth begin to utter their voices, "the Master of the house will rise up and shut to the door" of admission into His secret presence. By those within this pavilion will then no longer be heard the strife of unbelieving tongues raging without in mockery of the foolish fears, needless warnings, expostulations, and entreaties of those now safe within. But yet seven days, and the mockers will begin to cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us!"

MALACHI.

BEARING in mind this truth, that all the prophets have spoken of these last days, let us now turn to another prophecy, that of Malachi, in which we read of the very same day, "the day which Jehovah will make," and of the remnant who are spared. We shall hereafter see that Isaiah calls them "the escaping ones of Israel." They are also mentioned in Luke xxi. 36, where we thus read: "But be ye ever on the watch, praying always that ye may be able to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." Thus, then, from the New Testament itself we are taught that in the last days there are to be "escaping ones."

From Malachi, however, we learn something new; we now first read of the messenger who shall prepare the way for the sudden and unexpected, but secret, presence of the Lord, when He comes to act upon some of His Church as a refiner's fire, and as fuller's soap, that He may purify them as

gold and silver. This evidently is not what is called the Second Advent. This is the day of God, the beginning of that day. But who may abide it? Who that is cast into that refining fire will be able calmly to endure it? None will be able; for, as we are told elsewhere, "Then shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth" (Luke xiii. 23-30).

But beside the persons who have to endure this purifying fire, there will be some who "had feared the Lord, and spoken often one to another; to whom the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name. And they shall be my special treasure, saith Jehovah of hosts, "in the day that I make; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return (unto Me); and ye shall discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him who serveth God and him who serveth Him not" (Malachi iii. 16-18). Their eyes had been dim; but they have now been anointed, and they see what true service is. And are there not many now in the Church who are very active and busy in church and religious matters, but yet are not serving God? The earthly mind is not slain; and they have not mortified all their members which are of the flesh, as anger, pride, selfishness,

and envy. Will not this warning of the prophet apply to such? And, under present circumstances, would not that day come upon them unawares? But how will such Christians be able to abide that day? or how will they stand when Christ appeareth? for "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto Jehovah an offering in righteousness" (Mal. iii. 2, 3). "But upon you who fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall" (Mal. iv. 2). Thus clearly does Malachi also show that in the last days there will be two distinct classes of Christians. The one escape the judgments, and are healed, that is, they are glorified; the other are saved, yet so as by fire. But even then, because of their transgression against the daily sacrifice, these latter, as we have seen from Daniel, will be given into the hands of the little horn until the Ancient of Days comes in manifested glory.

But, further, a day will immediately follow which will consume both root and branch those who, loving not the Gospel truth, apostatize from it, and therefere are given over to the delusions of the Antichrist: "For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and

all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith Jehovah of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. iv. 1). This, then, is the overthrow of the impious king in the glorious land. But as we saw from Daniel that a part of the Church smote the image upon the feet, and caused it to pass away; so now we also read that they upon whom in the last days the Sun of righteousness shall arise, and heal them, are the very ones who "shall tread down the wicked; for," saith the Lord, "they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I make" (Mal. iv. 3).

ZECHARIAH.

THE fact of there being different classes of Christians in the latter days is also distinctly evident from Zechariah's prophecy (chapter xii.), where the prophet speaks of the final salvation of the whole remnant of Israel left on the face of all the earth. In this chapter, verse 7 describes what takes place first. Then follow the events of verses 10-14; while verses 2-6, 8, and 9 are fulfilled last of all. First, then, we have the saving of the tents of Judah; after that the wailing of all the tribes of Israel; then, lastly, the destruction of the nations who come against Jerusalem.

Remembering, therefore, that there has taken place a temporary transference of the kingdom of God from Judah to the Gentiles, we may say that the saved of Judah are now those Gentiles whose salvation is to be completed in their present attainment to the fulness of eternal glory, so that they should be a first fruit to God and the Lamb. These are they in whom the covenant will now be

"confirmed for one seven." Here then is one class of saints.

The saved ones of all the tribes of Israel represent another class, which includes both Israel themselves and an innumerable number of converts out of all nations. These, at their seeing the salvation of Judah, or rather of those now substituted for Judah, are thereby convicted of sin, and so go into "the great tribulation," the "refiner's fire" of Malachi, and here represented by the wailing of verses 10-14. But after that, having the spirit of grace and supplication poured upon them, they come out from it. And "in that day is opened for them the fountain for sin and uncleanness." This open fountain is Christ himself. The cleansing and healing water which flows from the fountain is the Holy Spirit, which Christ pours out upon all flesh after the passing away of the great tribulation. All Israel are thus saved, together with (as see Isa. xlix. 6-12) a multitude which no one can number, out of all peoples, and nations, and tongues.

The third act of this chapter is the overthrow of the army besieging Jerusalem. This is to be fulfilled in the war against the Lamb; or, as Daniel expresses it, "against the Prince of princes" in the "glorious land."

The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters of Zechariah's prophecy seem to form one vision. There

evidently is much in them that is to be fulfilled in the last days; for the vision of the two olive trees and candlesticks is repeated in the eleventh chapter of the Revelation. I will here, therefore, notice only that the high priest, and the civil governor, or king, are associated together in building the house of God. They are the two olive trees, or anointed ones, who through the pipes pour the oil of gold into the golden bowl on the top of the candlestick, which, with its seven lamps, is all of gold. The interpretation of this vision is thus expressed to the prophet, "Not by numbers, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts." The meaning of this can only be that it is not till the candlestick is thus arranged, and is "all of gold," that the Church will be able to accomplish her work in the world, as that work is indicated in the Scriptures; a sketch of which work has been attempted in the Outline, paragraph 9.

ISAIAH.

THE prophecy to which we now turn clearly and largely sets forth all that has been already spoken of, with the sole exception of the war with the saints. Isaiah is emphatically the prophet of the power and glory of the Church in the last days. No sooner does he open his lips than he begins to speak upon these subjects, and to tell of the new heavens, the new land, the holy Jerusalem come down from God, and the continual gathering of the nations to it; and he closes his prophecy with an express promise of the new creation in what he calls the last days. In this second chapter we read of the actual existence of the heavenly things, and of their presence in our world in what may be our own time. "It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of Jehovah's house (the true, not the old figures) shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all the nations shall flow unto it: and many peoples shall go and say, Come ye,

and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And He will judge among the nations, and rebuke many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isaiah ii. 2-4. "But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid" (Micah iv. 4). Thus "in the last days" the millennium is fully established, and the Church has done her work; only the Antichrist is not yet destroyed.

Having thus spoken of the glory revealed to all nations in the last days, the prophet immediately proceeds to show the state of those who, at the first, share not in the glory. He calls that time, which is the day of Christ, "the day of Jehovah of hosts," in which the Lord alone is to be exalted, and in which the idols are to be utterly abolished. This day of the Lord exposes the utter vanity of everything earthly; for the glory of Jehovah's majesty is revealed, now that He has risen to shake terribly the earth. In that day it is to be well with the righteous: but woe will be to the wicked; for the reward of his hands will be given

him. But in the close of this vision the prophet returns to the glory of those with whom it is then to be well. Therefore, in chapter iv. 2-6, he thus speaks: "In that day shall the branch of Jehovah (that is Christ) be for beauty and for glory, and the fruit of the land shall be excellent and comely, for the escaping ones of Israel. And Jehovah will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over the whole the glory shall be a defence: and shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and rain." Here, therefore, we again read of the assemblies of peoples from all parts of the earth, of which we were told first in chapter ii. 2-4. The new and glorious land is filled with the worshippers of Jehovah gathered from all parts of the earth. In the midst of the land is the new Mount Zion, and on its top is the holy city. There the King is set upon His throne, and with Him are the escaping ones, the first fruits to God and the Lamb. In the new land those of the nations who come up from time to time walk in the light of the city. By day the cloud of glory covers the land, as it covered the whole camp of Israel in the wilderness: and when the sun goes down, the glory of the city shines upon the assembled of the nations; so that there

is no night there. The blessedness and glory of this scene are greatly enlarged upon by the prophet in chapters lx., lxi., and lxii.

In chapters lxv. and lxvi. the prophet tells again of the great tribulation, and of the final destruction of the apostates, who out of their own minds invent a system of worship for themselves; but he at the same time speaks of the great joy of those who escape the tribulation, and after that are sent as missionaries, or preachers, to the whole world; while in the following words he sets forth the cause both of the gladness of the one, and of the wailing of the other, "For, behold, I create new heavens, and a new land: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come to mind." Then chapter lxvi. opens with the sublime words, "The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that ye build for Me? and where is the place of My rest?" Thus plainly does God declare that He requires not, nor will accept, any house as built for Him; and that He looks only to those who in their worship of Him feel their own poverty, are of a contrite spirit, and tremble at His word. So when the Messiah appeared He taught that the time for the fulfilment of this prophecy was come; and that henceforth they who truly worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth. In this Gospel dispensation, therefore, an age of building,

beautifying, and garnishing churches, and multiplying ceremonial, infallibly bespeaks a spiritual declension. The greater the earnestness in these things, the greater the carnality of mind. Wheresoever two or three are gathered for the purpose of worship, the place is consecrated for the time being, for Christ is there in the midst of them; so that where they are is holy ground. And so completely is emblematical ritual banished under the Christian dispensation, that God declares that even the burning of incense is esteemed by Him as the blessing an idol. Therefore God threatens that if in their worship of Him men will choose things in which He takes no delight, He also will choose their calamities, and bring upon them the very things they are afraid of.

But before this is accmplished, God will have manifested His favour towards the poor and contrite in spirit, who tremble at His word; for at that time they will have become Zion in her day of power; for we read, "A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, the voice of Jehovah rendering recompense to His enemies. Before she travailed she brought forth; before her pain came she was delivered of a man-child: because as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." God then "extends peace to her like a river; and the glory of the nations flows to her like a flowing stream." But when the hand of Jehovah shall

have been thus shown in favour of His servants, His indignation toward His enemies will be also made known; for they who choose that in which God delights not (then, according to what the heathen thought a holy worship, now, in what those called Christian think to be so,) "shall be consumed together, saith Jehovah: for I know their thoughts and their works." This consuming of them is finally brought about by their being deluded by the Antichrist, and their being led by him to invade the glorious land, for the extermination of those who dwell there. For thus saith God by the prophet: "It shall come to pass that I will gather all the nations and the tongues, and they shall come and see my glory. For I will set a sign among them, by sending the escaping ones of them (that is, those who escape the great tribulation) unto the nations; and they shall declare my glory among them. And the nations shall bring all your brethren out of all lands to my holy mountain, Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another shall some of all nations be continually coming to worship before me, saith Jehovah. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men who transgressed against me"—that is, the men of the Antichristian host, who had invaded the glorious land.

The glory which those of the nations who come

up behold, is that spoken of in chapter lx., in the words, "Jehovah shall arise upon thee" (that is, upon Zion), "and His glory shall be seen upon thee: and the nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." And in the close of the chapter he says: "The sun shall no more be thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but Jehovah shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory; and the days of thy mourning shall be ended:" all which corresponds exactly with what we read of the new Jerusalem in Revelation xxi. and xxii., where it is said of the city, "The glory of God did lighten it; and the Lamb is the light thereof. And there shall be no night there. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

In Isaiah xii. we have a song of praise to Jehovah for all the glorious things said in chapter xi. to have been wrought by the rod of Jesse: "Sing unto Jehovah; for He hath done excellent things: these are known in all the earth. Cry out, and shout, thou inhabitress of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

But it is to be observed most particularly that the things which are spoken of in chapter xi. verses 6-9, are the very same that in chapter lxv. verse 25, are said to take place after the creation of the new heavens and new land. Therefore it

is evident that the new creation which God has promised has appeared before the accomplishment of the events spoken of in chapters xi. and xii.; and that the Zion there named is the heavenly city come down to earth.

In Isaiah xxiv. we hear of the great tribulation, in which all joy is darkened, and the mirth of the land gone. We hear also of the escaping ones, and of their exuberant joy, while the rest of Israel, and the kings of the earth, and all its inhabitants, are involved in the deepest misery for many days; for, after speaking of the tribulation, the prophet says, "When thus it shall be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done. They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of Jehovah, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye Jehovah in the fires (that is, the fires of the tribulation), even the name of Jehovah, the God of Israel, in the isles of the sea." Then, in verses 17-20, the prophet foretells the utter passing away of the land of Israel, as to its former condition, and its never rising again. This, of course, includes the passing away of its heavens, and the creation of the new heavens and the new land. As we have seen from Joel, the great tribulation is the great and terrible day of Jehovah. But, says St. Peter, "The day of the

Lord will come as a thief, and in it the heavens will pass away with a great noise; the land also and the works in it will be burnt up." Thereupon the new heavens and land will be immediately created. So also the prophet Isaiah, having spoken of the complete removal of the old land, couples with it both the tribulation of all the earth and the appearance of the heavenly Zion in her glory; for he says that in the day of their passing away, "It shall come to pass that Jehovah will punish the host of the high ones that are on high —or, as they are described by St. John under the sixth seal, 'the great men, and the rich men, the chief captains, and the mighty men'—and the kings of the earth upon the earth: and they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and they shall be shut up in the prison: and after many days (according to Revelation ix. 10, after 150 days) they shall be visited. At that time the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when Jehovah of hosts shall reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem; and glory shall be before his ancients," as already set forth from chapter ii. 2-4; iv. 2-6; lx. 1-3, 19, 20; lxv. 13-25; and lxvi. 18.

In chapter xxv. verse 6, the prophet again speaks of the glorious holy mountain. He speaks also of the continual coming up to it of many out of all nations: for he says, "In this mountain will

Jehovah of hosts make unto all the peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all the peoples, and the veil that is spread over all the nations. And He will swallow up death in victory" (that is, first in the escaping ones, who are to be the first fruits to God); "and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of His people will He take away from off all the earth. And it shall be said in that day" (that is, by the escaping ones, when death in them is swallowed up in victory, and they are glorified), "Lo, this is our God; we waited for Him, and He has saved us: this is Jehovah, we waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." And "in that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah;" for Judah was to be the first saved: "We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt" (that is, during the great tribulation) "keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee" (Isa. xxvi. 1-3). Thus we may clearly see that it is the heavenly city which is spoken of. And, moreover, it is distinctly stated that a particular nation only is now to enter in. That nation

was Judah; who was to be the first to be saved, as we saw from Zechariah. (See also Matt. xxiii. 37.) But to that nation Jesus expressly said, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it" This nation is now the Gentile Church, provided only it will "keep the truth." But the prophet once more returns to the great day of Jehovah, which is coming against all the earth, and he closes the chapter by calling upon the escaping ones to hide themselves from it in the secret of the presence of Christ; "Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast: for, behold, Jehovah cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain" (Isa. xxvi. 20, 21).

In connection with this, the prophet speaks also of the resurrection of all the Church from the time of Adam. "Thy dead ones shall live, their dead bodies shall arise. Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew upon the herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

At the same time, like St. John in the Revelation, he as distinctly declares that the rest of the dead shall not yet rise: "The dead, they shall not live; the deceased, they shall not rise: because

Thou didst visit and destroy them, and madest all their memory to perish" (verse 14).

As in chapter iv. 2, so in chapter xxviii. 5, 6, the prophet speaks of the glory to be manifested on those who in the latter days are, as Daniel says, "strong" in the Spirit to do the work of God: "In that day shall Jehovah of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the remnant of His people, and for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle in the gate." But what manifest want of spiritual power has long pervaded all the old evangelical churches. There is not one able to turn even the battle now being fought in the gates of Zion. There is not one which is shining with such a glorious light of the truth as to draw to itself all who would find the truth. But, may we not hope* that there is now arising in the Church a new state of things, from which all denominationalism (as see 1 Cor. iii. 1, 4) will disappear, being destroyed in those who are waiting for it by a more than pentecostal

* This work was in fact written in Australia in the year 1873. Since then the Oxford Conference of September, 1874, has been held, and though fully persuaded that the work there and in other places, and by other means so largely developed, will lead to and tend to bring on those times of refreshing with which the last days commence; yet I think it better to retain the above expression of simple hope.

measure of spiritual life and power? It is to those who receive this, that Jehovah will afterwards become as a crown of glory which will never fade away, and for such manifested strength and power that even in the evil day they shall turn the battle in the gate.

In chapter xxix. 17, there is a direct allusion to the immediate new creation of the promised land in its widest extent, which comprehends the whole of Eden: "It is not a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the (formerly accounted) fruitful field shall be esteemed a forest." The full meaning of this is shown by the words of Psalm lxxii. 16, where it is said, "There shall be a handful of corn in the land, on the top of the mountains:" for these words occur in a Psalm which speaks only of millennial times, when Christ is again present on the earth, when all kings fall down before Him, and all nations serve Him.

The great tribulation and the simultaneous joy of a remnant are clearly spoken of in chapter xxx. 27-29: "Behold, the name of Jehovah cometh from far; consuming is His anger, and its burden is grievous; His lips are full of indignation, and His tongue as a devouring fire. And His breath as an overflowing stream shall reach even to the neck, to sift the nation with the sieve of vanity: and there shall be a bridle in the jaws

of the peoples causing them to err. Ye shall have a song in the night, as when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart as when one goeth with a pipe to come to the mountain of Jehovah, to the mighty One of Israel."

The great tribulation is the manifested anger of God against the unrepented shortcomings of His own Church, and the iniquities of all nations, and thus the prophet speaks of it in chapter xxxiii. 13-18: "Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and ye that are near, acknowledge My might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" "Who shall abide that day?" said Malachi. And the answer is, "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from the holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from the hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil: he shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." And as Christ will then be on the earth in His secret presence, it is said also of these same persons, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty:" and as the new land is about to be created by Him, their speedy entrance into it is promised.

"They shall behold the land of far distances," that is, Immanuel's new and greatly enlarged land. Lastly, it is said of these escaping ones, "Thy heart shall meditate terror," that is, the terrors of the great tribulation, in which all the rest of mankind are involved.

Chapter xxxiv. describes the judgment of Edom, which is perhaps a type of the utter overthrow of the last great Antichrist. (Also see chap. lxiii. 1-6.)

In chapter xxxv. the prophet closes a lengthened prophecy with a glowing description of Immanuel's land, now a wilderness by sin, but then once more become the garden of the Lord; and, while he alludes to the great tribulation, he speaks of the escaping ones, who behold the King in His beauty, as abiding in the land: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our God." The prophet then addresses those who are to be the first to enter the land: "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees: say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not. Behold your God; vengeance cometh, the retribution of

God;" that is, in the great tribulation, "He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those who escape: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall dwell there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon: it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of Jehovah shall return and come to (the heavenly) Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Such language as this can be paralleled only by that used in the Revelation in connection with the new Jerusalem.

In chapter xl. 1-11, the work of Elijah is clearly defined. John the Baptist left his work unfinished; but the completing of his work in the last days is to result in nothing less than the ingathering of the first fruits, and their being illumined, or irradiated; for the prophet closes his description of the first part of Elijah's mission with the words, "And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed,

and all flesh shall see it together." Then follows a declaration of the sum and substance of the preaching which is to be followed by the glorious results produced by the return of Christ to His Church: "Behold, the Lord God will come in His strength!" and to the Gentile Church will then be given the glory of initiating the everlasting kingdom, a glory which Judah lost (Mic. iv. 8; Matt. xxi. 43). It was this truth that called forth our Lord's command to His disciples, that they should not go into the way of the Gentiles; also His words to the Phœnician woman, that He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: and then His final command to His disciples to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. The term "kingdom of God" means the sovereignty of the world. The men who have yet held it have all been unequal to the task. It is intended solely for the Church, for those anointed with the Holy Ghost. Therefore "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation," but in the secret unction of the Spirit; and when the Church on earth has received the fulness of the Spirit, then "the kingdom of the world will become our Lord's and His anointed peoples', and they shall reign for ever and ever." This sovereignty is the true throne of David, on which the true David will sit, and with Him all who overcome.

The mighty spiritual power of some part of the Church in the last days is clearly shown in Isaiah, xlix. throughout. It is Zion who there says, "Listen unto me, ye maritime lands, and hearken, ye peoples from far: Jehovah called me from the womb, and said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified." But it is also evident that at this very time all the rest of Israel are cast off; for it is added, "and now, saith Jehovah, He that formed me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, that Israel may be gathered, and that I may be glorious in the eyes of Jehovah, and my God may be my strength; yea, He said, it is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel." Here then we see a great distinction made between Zion and Israel: Zion exalted, but Israel cast off. But Zion is to be the means of the restoration of Israel. But not only this, there is some far greater work to be accomplished by Zion as the servant of Jehovah: "This is too small a thing," says God; "I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be My salvation unto the ends of the earth." Then follows a description of the happy state both of these Gentile converts and of the saved of Israel also: "They shall feed in the ways, and their

pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst: neither shall the heat nor sun smite them, for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them; even by the springs of water shall He guide them. And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from far, and these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim," or China. This language ought to be compared with that of Revelation vii. 9-17, where the innumerable converts out of all nations are spoken of. It is clear that both passages speak of the same glorious work to be achieved by Zion in the last days. This is what was set forth in the Outline, paragraph 9. But the restoration of the foolish virgins is not here spoken of by the prophet: they do not enter into the happy state above described, for they are to be given into the hand of the little horn up to the Advent.

The glory of the Church in the latter days, the existence of the new land, and the presence therein of the new Jerusalem, are evidently supposed and set forth in such passages as the following: "Jehovah will comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm

of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old." God will do this: "Therefore the redeemed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away" (chap. li. 3, 9, 11). "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean" (chap. lii. 1). "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day, then shalt thou delight thyself in Jehovah; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it" (chap. lviii. 13, 14). What are the true high places of the earth but the heavenly mountain of Zion and the holy city on its heights? These are the eternal heritage of Jacob.

That the actual presence of Christ in His Church is necessary for the salvation of all Israel, in the last days, is evident from St. Paul's quotation of Isaiah lix. 20, 21: "The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to the turners away of transgression from Jacob." The glorified escaping ones are the instruments He uses, as we distinctly learn from chapter xlix. 6, where God tells Zion

that as a sharp sword or a polished shaft in His hand she shall do this; and not this only, for it is too light a thing for her now that she is glorified: He will also send her forth for salvation to the ends of the earth.

Chapters lx., lxi., and lxii. need only to be read in connection with Revelation xxi. and xxii. to see that they speak of the heavenly city, and of the new heavens and new land; of a glorified Church; and of the constant coming up of worshippers from all parts of the earth.

Isaiah lxiii. 1-6 refers to the final destruction of the Antichrist. Thus we read: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? Wherefore art thou red in thy apparel, and thy garments like one that treadeth the winepress?" These words of the prophet seem parallel to Revelation xiv. and xix., where the great winepress of the wrath of God is spoken of; and the rider on the white horse is said to be clothed in a vesture dipped in blood. From verse 7 to the end of the following chapter is a lamentation over the present long-continued hopeless state of Israel: a type of past careless evangelical churches, and of their condition during "the war with the saints."

Chapter lxv. 1, speaks of a revival in religion, in which those who before had not known Christ are added to the Church; while at the same time a large body of those who before were members of

the Church not only are not benefited by this time of blessing to many, but they go further from God, set up forms of their own devising, and say to all others: "We are the Church, and you have no right to call yourselves of it: stand by; come not near to me, I am holier than thou." Upon this state obtaining a place in the Church, God immediately says, "I will bring forth some out of all the tribes of Jacob, and out of Judah, and they shall ascend My holy mountain, and inherit the new land. But as for you apostates who have forsaken Me, and have chosen things in which I delighted not, I will send upon you a strong delusion, even the Satan-inspired and wonder-working Man of Sin, and ye shall believe the lie he utters that he is My Messiah, God manifested in the flesh; for he shall set himself up above all that is called God. Therefore I will number you to the sword; and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter, and ye shall leave your name for a curse upon the earth." This is the end of the Antichrist and of all his followers upon the coming of the Ancient of Days. But before this there is to be a time of tribulation, during which those who had been called out from all the tribes of Israel shall "sing for joy of heart;" but the apostates shall "cry for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit." For the old heavens and land of Eden are to pass away

with a great noise and with a mighty earthquake, and the new heavens and the new land are to be created in such beauty and glory, that the former shall not be remembered nor come to mind. So when the signs of the coming of these things are seen in the heavens, and the sun becomes black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon becomes as blood, then shall all the tribes of the earth wail, and the high ones on the earth, and the kings, and the great men, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman shall flee to hide themselves in the tops of the rocks and in the caves of the earth, for fear of Jehovah, and for the glory of His majesty, now that Jesus has risen up from the right hand of the Father, and is come in the power of His secret presence, because His day is now to begin. Therefore being again on earth in the fulness of His power, He speaks, and the new creation appears; He commands, and it stands for ever. Therefore God thus says to all the earth: "Be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create, for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing; and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people, and they shall weep no more. There shall be no more (in the earth) from that time an infant of days, nor an old man who hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old. Men shall build houses, and inhabit them; they shall plant vine-

yards, and eat the fruit of them; for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. And it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." Nor is the lower creation forgotten: "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith Jehovah." God's house is now a house of prayer for all the peoples.

In tracing these events thus rapidly, one very obvious point has been unnoticed, namely, the previously depressed spiritual condition of those whom Christ uses as His instruments for the accomplishment of His purposes in the last days. Their low estate is intimated in Isaiah xl. 27, in the words, "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from Jehovah, and my judgment is passed over from my God?" And again, in Isaiah xli. 14: "Fear not, thou worm, Jacob, and ye dead ones of Israel: I will help thee, saith Jehovah, thy Redeemer." In Isaiah xlix. those who are addressed as Israel, and are called God's servant, in whom He will be glorified, had previously said, "Jehovah hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." In Isaiah liv. that Church which is to have many more children

than have been given to any other, who is therefore told to lengthen her cords and to strengthen her stakes, is called, in verse 1, barren and desolate. In verses 6-8 she is thus addressed, "Jehovah hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit. For a small moment have I forsaken thee," saith God to her; "but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee:" while in verse 11, God says to her, "O thou afflicted one, thou tossed with tempest, and not comforted." In Isaiah lxvi. 5, God by the prophet thus once more speaks to Zion, when she is about suddenly to become the mother of an innumerable seed: "Hear the word of Jehovah, ye that tremble at His word; your brethren that hated you, who cast you out for My name's sake, said, Let Jehovah be glorified." But whenever Zion is thus addressed, it is when she is about to appear as God's servant to accomplish His glorious work in the last days. This previous deep humiliation of those who are to be exalted is a needful discipline. It must be received at the hands of their brethren; and it is set forth in the words, "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom." It was exemplified in the life of Joseph, of Moses, and of David, who were first of all "refused" by their own people. So in the last days, the time of "the regeneration,

when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory," the few who will have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God will first be hated and cast out. Of these the Church in Philadelphia was a type (Rev. iii. 7-12). And many now first will be last, and the last will be first, in entering into the kingdom: while some who will seem as if they had entered in will be cast into the darkness outside the pale of the chosen few, where will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

THE PSALMS.

If we now turn to the Psalms, we shall find the same language used in them that is used in the prophets. These hymns of praise are very concise, and by this means their authors bring vividly before our minds both those glorious works which have been already accomplished by Jehovah, and also His future judgments and purposes. As a general view of future events, as delineated in prophecy, has now been brought before the reader, he will be able at once both to appreciate the psalmist's conciseness, and to perceive the vastness of the prospect which even a few verses of these inspired poets set before him. Taken alone, any particular Psalm would teach little or nothing definite, but having the prophecies of Daniel and Isaiah clearly in our minds, we can readily perceive the purport of the Psalms. Thus we shall find that their very conciseness strengthens the mind and elevates the soul.

Let us take Psalm ii., in which, though so

brief, the Holy Spirit gives in a marvellously concise manner a great part of the history of the last days. We do not indeed read of the secret coming of Christ, nor of the creation of the new heavens and land; but we are told of Christ's actual presence on earth, and of the existence of the new heavens and land, for the heavenly Mount Zion is distinctly spoken of. In verse 6, therefore, we thus read: "Yet have I set My King upon Zion, the mountain of My holiness." Here then we see that the words of Isaiah ii. 2, are fulfilled; as also those of Isaiah xi. 1-5; lxv. 17, 18, and Revelation xiv. 1.

In verses 1-5 we have the history of the last three and a half years of the Antichrist of Daniel, and of Revelation xi. 15-18, and xix. 11-21. The papal nations, who apostatized from the truth ages ago, with modern sceptics, and apostatizing Ritualists and Broad Church of this day, having all become worshippers of the last and great Antichrist, are angry because God has set His king upon Mount Zion. They therefore make war with the Prince of princes.

In verse 9 we read, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." With this we may compare the promise made to the Church of Thyatira; "To him that overcometh and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power

over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of My Father."

In Psalm xiv. 7, the same heavenly Zion, established on the earth in the last days, is referred to in the words, "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion." With this corresponds the words of Isaiah: "I will place salvation in Zion for Israel My glory" (chap. xlvi. 13); as do also the words quoted by St. Paul from Isaiah lix. 20: "There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (See notes on Isa. xlix.)

Psalm cx., in remarkable language, speaks of the time when Christ will have left the right hand of the throne in heaven, and be present on the earth. His power is then manifested out of the holy city, the new Jerusalem. All Israel are then saved, as foretold in Isaiah xlix. 1-14; and also a multitude out of all the heathen, whose number shall be as the drops of the morning dew. The overthrow of the kings who join the Antichrist in the war with the Lamb is also spoken of, together with the slaughter of their armies in the new and glorious land, and from out of Zion—"Jehovah said unto My Lord, Sit thou at My right hand, until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool. Jehovah will send the rod of Thy strength out of Zion: rule Thou in the midst of Thy enemies.

Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of holiness (in number more than the drops born) from the womb of the morning. Thou hast a dew of Thy young men. Jehovah at Thy right hand will strike through kings in the day of His wrath. He will judge among the nations; He will fill (the land) with their dead bodies; He will wound the heads over many countries."

Psalms xxvii. 5, and xxxi. 19, 20, speak of the escaping ones as safe in the secret presence of Christ, after He has come as a thief, and the world, yea, and the greater part of the Church, too, knows not that He is again on earth. Thus we read: "In the time of trouble," the time of wailing and great tribulation so often spoken of in Scripture, "He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret of His tabernacle shall he hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock." And again, "Oh, how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee, which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men. Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues." These words show also both the previous depressed external condition of those who are to be thus hidden; and how they will be despised and hated even by their brethren.

In Psalm xlv. we read of the presence of Christ, and of His setting up the everlasting kingdom of God in the last days. We also there read of the two classes of saints, the escaping ones, and their converts out of Israel and the Gentiles. The escaping ones are the "queen arrayed in gold of Ophir," and "the king's daughter who is all glorious within" the city; the converts are "the virgins, her companions, who with gladness and rejoicing are to be brought into" the new land, but not as yet into the city itself. The judgments to be inflicted on the Antichrist are indicated in the words, "Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, Thou Mighty One;" and the actual commencement of His everlasting kingdom, in the words, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

The anger of the nations of Antichrist at the setting up of this kingdom is fully expressed in Psalm xlvi. 4-6: "There is a river the streams of which make glad the city of God, the holy places of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved, God shall help her (against the invading host of Antichrist), and that right early. The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted." The psalmist then tells us, as we have already learnt from Isaiah, that it is when Christ thus rebukes the nations that they shall

learn war no more; for now "He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth."

In Psalm xlvii. we read of the complete establishment of the kingdom of God by means of the saints of the high places: "He shall subdue the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet." Then the nations are called upon to praise God because He everywhere is King: "Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises: for God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the nations: God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness."

Psalm xlviii. 1, 2, speaks of the glorious holy mountain of Daniel, the holy city, and the presence of Christ therein: "Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion."

Psalm l. 2, speaks of the same: "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

In Psalm lxxxvii. 2, 3, we also read of the same heavenly city: "Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God." Here is an evident distinction made between the city itself and the glorious land, where the children of Zion are dwelling. The glorified part of the Church, the queen of Psalm xlv., are in the city.

The happy security of the escaping ones in the secret presence of Christ during the judgments, and their attainment of eternal life without tasting death, are largely dwelt upon throughout Psalm xci., which begins thus: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." And it ends by saying, "With long," that is, with eternal, "life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation:" that is, the salvation promised in Isaiah xxv. 8, 9.

Those converts of Zion, who are the foolish virgins restored to the Church, and who dwell among the Antichristian nations, and are to be persecuted and slain during the 1,260 days, or forty-two months which precede the Second Advent, are clearly spoken of in such Psalms as the xliv., lxxiv., and lxxix., the last of which begins with the words, "O God, the heathen are come into Thy inheritance, they have laid Jerusalem on heaps:" which passage seems plainly to be alluded to in Revelation xi. 2, where it is said, "The court which is without the temple leave out, for it is given unto the heathen: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty-two months."

In Psalm xcvi. we hear of the new song of the harpers of Revelation xiv. 2, 3. It is the song of final salvation, and is sung by the harpers, when, having attained to the fulness of eternal glory, they stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion, in the

new Jerusalem. All the nations have by this time been taught that Jehovah is King: therefore the heavens and the earth are called upon to rejoice and be glad, because He is now coming to judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples with His truth: though at the same time, and at this very thing, the Antichristian nations rage.

Psalms xcix. and c. speak of the kingdom of God as fully established on the earth; and the peoples are called upon to come up to His courts in the new Jerusalem with praise and thanksgiving.

Psalm cxviii. speaks of the escaping ones in their primary depressed and despised condition; of their exaltation; and of their triumphant entrance through the gates into the holy city.

Finally the joy of Israel saved, and the new song of the escaping ones, when they are with the Lamb on Mount Zion, and as they rejoice in their full salvation and glory, and are armed with the power of God for their reconstruction of the kingdom, or sovereignty, of the world, and for their last and great triumph in the war with the Antichristian confederacy of the last days, in which war they themselves, as the armies in heaven, are to appear with Christ in glory, are distinctly referred to in Psalm cxlix., with which we may compare Psalm ii. 8, 9, and Revelation ii. 26-28:

"Praise ye Jehovah. Sing unto Jehovah a new song, and His praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. For Jehovah taketh pleasure in His people: He will beautify the meek with salvation." (See Isaiah xxv. 8, 9.) "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their couches. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the nations, and punishments upon the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron: to execute upon them the judgment which is written.

"This honour have all His saints.

"Praise ye Jehovah."

Psalm cl., in calling upon everything that hath breath to praise Jehovah, shows that now at length the kingdom of the world is the Lord's, and that He alone is the Governor among the nations. Every enemy is subdued; and all the works of Jehovah praise Him.

THE REVELATION.

The book of the Revelation of St. John now claims our attention. Like the prophecies of Daniel, it speaks of the political events connected with the Antichrist; and like the Psalms and the prophecies of Isaiah, it tells of the glory of the Church in the latter days. With the sole exception of what relates to Babylon, this whole book from the fourth seal onward occupies a period of not more than ten and a half years, which is made up of the last week of Daniel and the preceding time of the first part cf Elijah's ministry.

In chapter i. 3, we are told that the book will not be read aright till the time of the end. From verse 10 to verse 20 we have a vision of a glorious angel, who represents the Son of man. This angel shows the apostle the whole of these visions; the which being concluded, St. John falls before his feet to worship him, but is forbidden. In the angel's hand are seven stars. We see also seven golden candlesticks. These latter represent the

Church in its power in the last days, and they correspond with the candlesticks of Zechariah's vision, and of the eleventh chapter of this book. They also represent the seven Churches of Asia, or rather, what those Churches ought to have been: and they at the same time represent the seven divisions, parties, or schools into which the whole Church is now divided.

1. The Church of Ephesus may represent the Evangelical Nonconformists.

2. The Church of Smyrna may represent that part of the universal Evangelical Church which, not being ready for the secret presence of Christ, will have to endure the outside darkness, the great tribulation, and to suffer persecution and death at the hands of the Antichrist, even up to the time of the Second Advent. The tribulation of this Church embraces a period of about ten years, extending from the time of the sealing of the 144,000 to the Second Advent.

3. The Church of Pergamos may represent Evangelical Episcopalians.

4. The Church of Thyatira, the High Church, which, by the connivance and action of the bishops, is rapidly being transformed into the apostacy of Rome.

5. The Church of Sardis may represent the Greek Church and the Jesuits. These latter now like to be called Ultramontanes, that their defor-

mity may be hidden. They are composed of two apparently distinct bodies, the Papists and Ritualists.

6. The Church of Philadelphia may represent Isaiah's barren, desolate, despised, and afflicted one, who afterwards becomes the Zion of the latter days, the subject of universal prophecy. It is a universal revival church.

7. The Church of Laodicea may represent those holding Broad Church principles.

In passing from the epistles addressed to the seven churches, one question may be asked: Are the promises which the Holy Spirit makes to those who overcome to be fulfilled to the Church before the end of the present dispensation? Certainly they are. We have already found proofs of this in the prophecies of Isaiah and Daniel, and in the Psalms, in which we have seen the Church set forth as ruling the nations with a rod of iron, and breaking them in pieces like the vessels of a potter. But if one, then all of these seven promises must surely be equally fulfilled at the same time.

THE SEVEN SEALS.

The fourth and fifth chapters of the Revelation are a description of the things in the heavens; and they set before us God and the Lamb upon the throne; the elders, or saints already risen

from the dead; the living ones, or spirits of just men made perfect; and the general assembly of the angels.

The Lamb is represented as opening the seven (completely) sealed book, which is in the hand of Him who sits upon the throne. The seals are thus placed first, because some of the events foretold in them precede all others here spoken of, and the rest extend through the whole prophecy, up to the time when the Son delivers up the kingdom to His Father. The first four seals seem to speak of the old Roman empire; the last three seals, of things in the heavens.

The non-Christian Roman empire in its last stage is one of the great subjects of prophecy; and the first four seals, as expounded in the "Horæ Apocalypticæ" of Elliott, seem to tell of a state of prosperity and of the beginning of a rapid decline in that empire. This period extended from the accession of Nerva, A. D. 96, to the elevation of Diocletian, A. D. 284; before the accession of the latter of whom the empire had been brought to the verge of dissolution by means of the terrible judgments, seemingly described in the second, third, and fourth seals; and so literally fulfilled upon the falling empire. For a season, however, the western empire partially recovered its standing; but within a short time the imperial power ceased. Then, as we read in Revelation

xvii. 8, the state became "the beast that was, and is not, and that shall ascend out of the bottomless pit." In this non-imperial condition of that kingdom it was that, as is said in Revelation xvii. 3, the harlot Babylon, the Papacy, sat upon the beast, and ruled it till A. D. 1870. Then the Roman imperial power rose out of the abyss, and returned to life. Immediately, therefore, depriving the harlot of her temporal authority, it deposed her from her throne, which it seized for itself. Consequently the old empire being now revived, and having become the eighth head of the beast, is ready, in the person of whosoever may be its chief ruler, to be inspired with all the energy of Satan, as soon as the spiritual power of the Evangelical Church shall be so increased as to necessitate the raising up of such a mighty adversary to the truth as the Antichrist will prove. When the infant Church of Pentecost shall have grown towards the stature of perfect men in Christ, Satan will need the action of the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition; and he will cause him, as inspired by himself, to stand forth before the world as the Messiah, God in human flesh; to be admired and worshipped by all those of christendom who have not received the love of the truth.

The first four seals therefore bring us to the period of the decline and fall of the Roman empire. But here comes a great gap in the

prophecy, stretching beyond the present moment in which we are now living; also beyond the coming of Elijah, and the sealing of the 144,000; for the fifth seal makes known to us the cry of the holy martyrs, who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held. But why are they represented as then crying for vengeance? It seems to be because Jesus is at that time leaving the right hand of the throne in heaven, to come down to earth, in order to accomplish all the great and stupendous works which are foretold as taking place in the last days, in which the millennium is to be established, and the enemies of Christ are to be given into His power. Therefore the martyrs expect to be at once avenged. But from the fifth seal we learn that the time of vengeance is to tarry yet a little season; because other martyrs are yet to be slain as they had been. This last slaying, then, refers us to the war with the saints, of which we learnt from Daniel that it should be for the time, times, and half a time immediately preceding the coming of the Ancient of Days; at which point of time the Little Horn should have accomplished his purpose of scattering the power of the holy people. What is called "the day of Christ," or "the day when the Son of Man is revealed," begins when He leaves the right

hand of God, and comes to the earth in "the secret of His presence" (Ps. xxxi. 19, 20).

The sixth seal is opened in the very beginning of the day of Christ, while the wise virgins are with Him at the marriage feast, and while the foolish virgins, after having gone to buy oil for their lamps, are standing without, astounded at the denial of their request. When they return the door is shut; however, they knock, and ask for admission, saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us." A voice from within refuses their request, and they remain without in all the anguish of despair. Then the sixth seal is opened. Its awe-inspiring wonders suddenly burst upon the world in all their terror. The unequivocal signs that the great and terrible day of Christ has begun are now seen. The earth quakes, the heavens tremble, the land of Eden is shaken by a great earthquake, and the whole region is dissolved by fervent heat, while the heavens above it pass away with a great noise. The mountains of that land depart; its sea is no more. It may be that the central fires of the earth are poured upon the surface of that land till it is submerged in a burning deluge, as in ages long past, various regions of the earth have been often submerged in water.

Thus the whole region, with the works that are in it, is burnt up. From the burning land

smoke and pillars of fire overspread the heavens of the surrounding countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe. The sun becomes black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon becomes as blood. The inhabitants of the earth, having by the preaching of Elijah heard of the coming of the day of wrath, are filled with terror. The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, then hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and say to the mountains and rocks "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne; for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" (See Isa. ii. 6-22; Joel ii. 30, 31; Zeph. ii. 14-18.)

The new heavens and the new land are immediately created, the new Mount Zion rises, and the holy city at once comes down upon it from heaven (Rev. xxi. and xxii.). Thus the new heavens and the new land are finished, perhaps in six days.

The interpretation of the seventh seal cannot be easily determined. But as the silence is said to be in heaven, the opening of this seal probably represents what does not take place till after the judgment of the nations living on the earth at the time of the Second Advent. Therefore we may thus speak of it. After Christ has descended to

the earth, with all His saints, and in the manifested glory of His Second Advent, and while He is sitting on His throne judging the nations, God himself comes down to earth into His tabernacle, the new Jerusalem, to dwell with men for ever. So, in order that God may be all in all, the Son, on His reascension and re-entrance into the holy city, after the judgment of the nations, immediately delivers up to the Father the kingdom which by His Father's authority He has at length completely recovered from the consequences of Adam's sin. Therefore we are here told what then takes place in the holy city. The whole number of the elect being now for the first time assembled before the throne, they, with all the host of angels, bow themselves before God in silent adoration "by the space of half an hour."

The solemnity of such a scene is best expounded by a reverential silence.

The above mode of interpreting the seals makes them extend through almost the whole of the Revelation, and has led us onward to the consummation of all things. Therefore we must now turn back to a course of events which take place in some of the intervals between the opening of the several seals.

THE 144,000 SEALED.

The first four trumpets seem to be spoken of

in Revelation vii. 1, but if so, the sounding of them is postponed till after the sealing of the 144,000. Therefore what we have next to notice is, not the hurting of the earth, the sea, and the trees, by the sounding of these trumpets, but the sealing of the servants of God in their foreheads; for the angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God, cries to the angels who appear to have the first four trumpets, saying, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." This sealing takes place only a very short time before the opening of the sixth seal.

We may here ask, Who are the servants of God? Servants are they who "do whatsoever is commanded them;" not they who say, We would do thus, but cannot. Therefore they are the servants of God, who not only live in the Spirit, but also walk in the Spirit, and "overcome, and keep Christ's works unto the end," and are perfect in every good word and work. These are God's servants, and they are to be sealed in their foreheads for admission into the secret presence of Christ, and for escape from the judgments of the great and terrible day, whose coming is announced by the opening of the sixth seal; for it is written, "Come not near any man upon whom is the mark" (Eze. ix. 6).

If in the Revelation there is any symbol which points out the coming of Elijah, and his mission to prepare the way for the sudden and unexpected secret presence of the Lord in His temple, as foretold in Zechariah iii. 1-6, the angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God, must be that symbol. The sealed ones are a people prepared for the Lord Jesus, to do His great works in the last days. They are the Church of Philadelphia, who are to be kept from the hour of trial which is to try all the earth; and whom we can trace through the Revelation, first as the sealed ones; then as the woman clothed with the sun; next as the future worshippers in the temple; then as the harpers standing by the sea of glass, before they enter the heavenly temple; after that, as those in the temple, and standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion; and lastly, as the armies in heaven, coming with the Lord to tread the winepress without the city, for the destruction of the Antichristian host. Thus the sealed ones take the glory of Judah, who was to have been saved first. But the tribe of Judah had been substituted for all Israel, ten of whose tribes had been cast off. Hence, when the kingdom was taken from Judah and given to the Gentiles, whatsoever had been given to Judah, as the heir of the kingdom, was made over to those who were substituted in their room; and who are then

spoken of as though they themselves were Israel. The language of the Old Testament must not be abandoned to suit a purely Gentile Church; but those Gentiles who are called to fill the place left vacant by the seed of Jacob are called by the name of Israel; for it is said to them, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Therefore when the sealing intended for Judah, but originally for all Israel, was to be transferred from Judah to the Gentile Church, the various sections of that church out of which the sealed ones are taken are called by the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, whose birthright of glory is now for a time to be inherited exclusively by another people; nor is it till all Israel see the glory which they have temporarily lost arising, or coming in, upon the Gentile Church, that they will be moved to jealousy, and be saved; for says St. Paul, "Through your mercy they are to obtain mercy." And again, "Blindness has befallen Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in," for "the pleroma," or fulness, means "glory."

But what is this sealing in the forehead? It does not appear to be any outward mark, visibly distinguishing those who are sealed, so as to show the rest of the Church that those thus sealed are indeed God's special treasure, for we have elsewhere learnt that they who in the latter days are

to be the means in God's hand of establishing His everlasting kingdom will not escape the hatred of their brethren until Christ hides them in the secret of His presence, as in a pavilion. The sealing is, then, probably a full and perfect knowledge of the Gospel, together with a visible walk consistent with it, and an assured faith in the promises of the kingdom, as those promises will be set forth by Elijah. Christ himself endured for professing himself to be the coming King; and, as we read of the Church of Philadelphia, His servants in the last days will have to "keep the word of His endurance." Their lives also will be such as becomes the Gospel of Christ; not such as we were once told that our lives must be in this present dispensation, of which the words of St. Paul, in Romans vii. 7-25, were said to be a description, as being a portraiture of his now Christian experience; but such a life as is set forth in Romans vii. 6, and in Romans viii. throughout. These two latter are continuous passages, and represent a life of victory, not of incessant defeat; of freedom by the new man, which is Christ in us, not of slavery to the old Adam; of spiritual power, and not of carnal weakness. To him who thus overcometh belong all the exceeding great and precious promises of both this prophecy and all Scripture.

As soon, then, as the number of the sealed ones

is complete, Jesus fulfils His promise made to us in John xiv. 18-21, when He said to His disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless; I am coming to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see Me: because I live, ye shall live also. In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you. He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and make myself manifest to him." Here, then, is something beyond what the Church has yet experienced and known: for it is something to which individuals attain only after a certain course of obedience. Some very few have, in their dying hour, had a manifestation of Jesus in His glory: but the promise here made by Christ to those who obey Him is the sight of Jesus in life, not in death; for it is not a going to Christ, but a coming of Christ to them: for the promise of verse 21 is repeated in verse 23, where Jesus says, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him." This then is the secret presence of Christ, in which those thus privileged to see Him will be hidden, as in a pavilion, from the taunts of their brethren; and immediately afterwards from the things which are coming on the earth.

It is not to be supposed that these escaping ones will be gathered into any particular spot. Wheresoever the Church is, there will be some sealed out from it: and there the sealed ones will remain, being ever and anon blessed with the sight of Christ; putting on more and more of the image of His glory, and increasing in the divine stature, till they are fully prepared to do Christ's work, as soon as He, having finished the creation of the new heavens and new land, is set by God upon His throne on the new Mount Zion. Here is the true throne of David.

THE SEVEN TRUMPETS.

The sealed ones having now the mark set upon them, and being thus secured against the coming judgments, the first four trumpets are sounded; and the earth, the sea, and the trees are hurt. The last three trumpets are three woes, by which the inhabitants of the earth are themselves hurt.

I omit for the present to speak of the great multitude which no one can number, because the time and manner of their conversion is not here mentioned. I will, however, say of them, that their being fully described immediately after the notice of the sealing of the 144,000 seems to imply that they are the spiritual seed of the sealed ones; but that their conversion does not take place in

consequence of the sealing, which of itself is not sufficient to produce so great and glorious a result.

Revelation viii. 3-5 may be said to represent that state of prayer and expectation which has for some years been maintained in the various churches. But if so, then this season of prayer will be followed by the pouring out to the earth of some of the fire of the altar, which fire is the Holy Spirit. The result of this outpouring of the Spirit is the sealing of the 144,000; and it is followed by great spiritual and temporal commotion, as voices, thunderings, lightnings, and earthquakes. Immediately after this sealing the trumpets begin to be sounded.

The first four trumpets may be fulfilled as literally as were the first four seals upon the falling Roman empire. The judgments of these trumpets are to fall on "the third part of the earth." We cannot say for certain what is thus meant. A suggestion only can be made, which is this: that at the time of the giving of this prophecy, the known world was divided into three parts, Asia, Africa, and Europe; and that "the third part" may mean one of these. That third part of the earth which has now for centuries received the greatest blessings from God is Europe. But she has not acted up to the light with which she has been blessed. Therefore these judgments of the latter days will begin

upon her, and it may be upon all hers scattered over the world.

If, as I suppose, the judgments of these trumpets are to be literally fulfilled, these four trumpets interpret themselves. The infidels and semi-infidels of the present day deny miracles. It may please God, on the sounding of these trumpets, to do something which might tend to bring them to another mind.

In consequence of what is said in Revelation vii. 1, I thus place the sounding of the first four trumpets immediately after the sealing of the 144,000. Therefore as by the sealing a people have been prepared for the Lord, and the first four trumpets have been sounded, Jesus leaves His seat in the heavens, and with ten thousands of His angels comes to earth in the full power of His secret presence. To the sealed ones He then manifests himself; and they beholding His glory begin to be changed into the same image, being transfigured from glory to glory, till they attain that state which, in Revelation xii. 1, is represented as "a woman clothed with the sun."

The glory which shone in the face of Moses when he came down from the mount, after forty days' communion with the Eternal Word, is now superseded by the more excellent glory, which, unlike that of Moses, will henceforth never cease to shine upon the world, but will increase unto

perfect and never ending day. Throughout all christendom these glorified saints are everywhere scattered, being seen and known of all men as the manifested sons of God. This glory or fulness, beginning to appear in them as soon as they see Christ, is the sign (Matthew xxiv. 30) of the Son of Man being in heaven. So when the rest of the churches, seeing their increasing blessedness, joy, and glory, come and knock, but are refused admission, then at once follows the opening of the sixth seal, and immediately, after the sounding of

THE FIFTH TRUMPET.

This trumpet is sounded about nine years before the Second Advent, and it ushers in the day of trial, which is to come upon the world unawares. Its sounding is followed by that universal wailing spoken of in Zechariah xii. 11-14, Matthew xxiv. 30, and Revelation i. 7. This is the great tribulation of Revelation vii. 14, and it seems to be accompanied by the belief that the day of grace is over and gone for ever, that the harvest is past, the summer ended, and that all those excluded from the marriage feast are eternally shut out from the kingdom of God. And well may such be the thought, for this is the time spoken of in Proverbs i. 24-35, the day in which God will not answer prayer. This is the

great and terrible day of the Lord, spoken of in all the prophets. It is the day of which Jesus spake, when He said, "I am come to send fire on the earth, and I would it were already kindled." It is the day that "is to come unawares, as a snare on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." It is "the hour of trial, which shall come on all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth." From it only the Church of Philadelphia, the 144,000 who are to be sealed, will be preserved, and that because in the depth of their humiliation they held fast the Word of Christ's endurance. The judgment of the fifth trumpet is thus described:—A star is seen which had fallen from heaven to the earth. This star is Satan, who alone of all the fallen angels has hitherto been allowed to walk the earth. The angels who fell with him are confined in chains under darkness. To Satan, then, is now given the key of the abyss in which the fallen of the host of heaven are as yet shut up. He opens the pit, and from it issues smoke as the smoke of a furnace, so that the sun and the air are darkened. Out of the smoke come forth locusts over the earth. These locusts are the evil spirits confined in the abyss. On their being thus freed they are let loose against all mankind, except only the sealed ones then with Christ at the marriage feast. These locusts, however, are com-

manded not to kill, but to torment mankind for five months, or 150 days, in whatsoever way they will. So great is the torment they inflict, that men would die rather than live: but die they dare not, for fear of something worse. These evil spirits are minutely described under the figure of locusts; and are said to have a king over them, who is the angel of the bottomless pit; whose name in Hebrew and in Greek is the Destroyer. Thus the first woe passes.

Such is the hour of trial which is to convince sinners of their ungodly deeds, and to try all who shall not have obeyed Wisdom's voice; but when those who had hearkened unto her shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." They will be kept in perfect peace.

But this great and terrible day will not come without due warning in the preaching of Elijah, as the forerunner of the secret presence of Christ. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man so cometh, will He find the belief of it on the earth? For His Second glorious Advent, however, the whole earth, except apostate christendom, will be waiting with joyful acclamation. (See Ps. xcvi. 10-13.)

THE SIXTH TRUMPET.

The sixth trumpet, which is sounded about four years before the Advent, is difficult of interpretation, because there is nothing corresponding to it

in the Old Testament. The subject is peculiar to the Revelation, for by the mention of the River Euphrates Babylon seems to be referred to; and that city, as symbolizing the papacy, is spoken of in no other part of Scripture. Had the Apostolic Gentile Church been faithful and obedient, the end would have come in the fall of the old Roman empire; and the great Papal harlot with her cup of abominations, of which so many apostatizing Protestants now delight to drink, would never have been heard of; but in consequence of the failing spirituality even of the Apostolic Church (as see Galations i. 6; 1 Corinthians iii. 1-4; the warning in Hebrews iii. 7-19; and iv. 1, 2; and the epistles to the churches of Asia, in Revelation ii. and iii.), a great gap has been made in the latter days, which has been filled up during the consequent temporary disappearance of the Roman imperial power, by the great harlot occupying its empty place. But when, after centuries of delay, the time is come for the fall of Babylon, then the beast who is to destroy her reappears as the eighth head, which is really only the sixth restored to life; and from it the great harlot must receive her doom. The sixth trumpet records the preparation for her fall. It is not sounded till near the middle of the week, which is the time when the revived beast has risen to the full height of his dragonic power;

and then it is sounded in close connection with the pouring out of the sixth vial of wrath. Babylon of old was seated upon many waters; so is the Babylon of our day, whose many waters are the Papal nations of Europe, and the Papists of the whole world: they "are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (Rev. xvii. 15). The imperial power of old Babylon was destroyed through the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates: so the papacy will be destroyed through the drying up of her many waters, as told in Revelation xvi. 12. This drying up of her Euphrates seems fully detailed under the sixth trumpet. The armies of the horsemen are most probably the angels of God, by whose instrumentality the third part of the men who form the waters of the Euphrates are to be destroyed. It may be that the angels will instigate the millions of the beast's adherents to slaughter the greater part of those who shall at that time cleave to the papacy, which will have so conducted itself as to become thoroughly hated. The world has already seen what Mahometans, Papists themselves, and Atheists, can do in the way of slaughter. It remains for it to learn what the followers of a Satan-inspired Messiah can do. But howsoever it may be executed, the judgment will not lead to repentance those who escape destruction. This is the second woe; and as soon as the waters are

thus dried up, Babylon herself will be utterly destroyed, as foretold in Revelation xvii. 15-18, and xviii. 1-24.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET.

The seventh trumpet, or third woe, quickly follows the sixth; for it is sounded immediately after the beginning of the second half of the week. In the middle of the week the sealed ones ascend Mount Zion, upon which the King had before been set, and they stand there with Him. They are now fully glorified; and their being on Mount Zion shows that they have become kings, and that the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven is theirs. Therefore the seventh trumpet is sounded, and there are great voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world is become our Lord's and His anointed peoples'; and they shall reign for ever and ever." Therefore this is the time when, to the dismay of Antichrist, all the rest of the nations bring the innumerable converts of the 144,000 into the new land of Eden, as is told us in Isaiah lx. 9. To make away with these, the Antichrist invades the land at the end of the week; but his armies are trodden in the great winepress by the saints on Mount Zion, who form the armies in heaven. The third woe is thus fulfilled.

THE MIGHTY ANGEL.

The trumpets, like the seals, have carried us forward in prophetic history. Therefore we must again turn back, but not so far as before; for the tenth chapter, to which we are now come, seems to speak of Elijah and the 144,000 after they have come forth from the feast, in order that, like Moses when he came down from the mount, they may execute the commands which they received from Christ while they were with Him.

The tenth chapter of the Revelation is, as it were, a summary of coming events, and an introduction to what is to follow. It pourtrays a sudden, life-giving, world-wide, glorious reformation. A mighty angel comes down from heaven. The time of his descent is just after the fulfilment of the events of the fifth trumpet, and before the last week of Daniel begins. The angel, as the representative of Elijah and the 144,000 sealed ones just after they have come forth from the feast, is clothed with a cloud, in order to veil the fulness of his glory; thereby signifying that the persons represented by him have not yet attained their full glory. The rainbow on his head shows that he brings the Gospel of the kingdom. In his hand is a little book open, which, however, he does not yet make use of. He stands upon the earth and sea, showing that his message concerns

all mankind, and he cries with a loud voice as a lion roareth. This is the deliverance of his message, and denotes the proclamation of the glad tidings of glory in the fulness of the power of the Holy Spirit. But, together with the preaching of this Gospel, there is now, as always, a threatening of the judgments of God against those who obey it not. Therefore the seven thunders utter their voices. Thus is given a warning of the judgments of the seven vials of wrath, which, though not yet to be fulfilled, are nevertheless now made known as ready to be poured on the disobedient. After this the angel announces with an oath the fixed purpose of God that the kingdom shall be delayed no longer; but that when the seventh angel shall be about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God shall be completed in the Church on earth by the sons of God being manifested before the world in the fulness of their eternal glory, even as God announced to His servants the prophets the glad tidings of His eternal purpose to accomplish this in Zion. (As see Isa. iv. 2; xxv. 8, 9; xxviii. 5, 6; lii. 1; lx. 1, 3; Dan. ix. 24; Mal. iv. 2.)

But now a very different scene is presented to us. The seer himself is made to act as the representative; for Elijah, the person now being spoken of, is to go forth to the completion of his work, entirely shorn of his glory. Therefore St.

John himself is told to take the little book out of the angel's hand, and to eat it up. To his palate it is sweet, as honey; for it expresses the will of God respecting His everlasting kingdom on the earth, as the angel had just sworn. As soon, however, as St. John had eaten the book, he found it bitter. But why? Even because to devour a book is to make oneself master of its contents. We have seen what these were; and to St. John they were sweet. But when a preacher has learnt from the book the will of God, which he always does with the greatest delight, what is to follow? He is publicly to make it known to all to whom he is sent. Their glad reception of his message would be additional sweetness; their rejection of it would be bitterness, especially if accompanied with their hatred and persecution of himself. Therefore, from St. John's finding the effects of his eating the book to be bitter, we learn that they to whom the last preacher of the Gospel is to be sent will hate, reject, and persecute him; and we see that they to whom Elijah is to be sent are neither few in number nor of small power; for to John it is said, "Thou must prophecy again against many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." This word "again" shows that the person here represented had just before been preaching among these and other nations.

According to this outline, then, the tenth chapter represents the united ministry of Elijah and the sealed ones, from the close of the marriage feast to the conversion of the innumerable multitude out of all nations; and after that, the sole ministry of Elijah up to the time of his being put to death by the beast from the bottomless pit. Therefore, as soon as the marriage feast is over, and Christ is set upon Mount Zion, Elijah and the 144,000, now become the woman clothed with the sun, preach the Gospel to the whole world, with, as we have said, the most glorious result. All this was represented by the angel crying with a loud voice as a lion roareth: that is, they speak with the voice of the lion of the tribe of Judah. The result is the birth of the man-child of Isaiah lxvi. 7, 8, and Revelation xii. 2, 5; which is the same act as the conversion of the innumerable multitude of Psalm cx. 3, Isaiah xlix. 6-12, and Revelation vii. 9-17. But after the 144,000 sealed ones have thus, under the presidency of Elijah, accomplished this glorious work, they fly as on eagles' wings into the newly created land of Eden: but Elijah does not accompany them; for he receives from God a special message to the apostate Papal nations to prophecy again among them, not in his late glory, but clothed in sackcloth. The result will be that his message is rejected, that

the judgments of the seven thunders are executed, and that he himself is slain. Thus will he experience the bitterness which St. John found as the effects of his eating the little book.

Exactly in the middle of the week, the time when Elijah is slain, the 144,000 leave the glorious land to ascend Mount Zion, and stand there with the Lamb in their full glory. Thus the mystery of God, as announced to the prophets, is completed; for in the 144,000 death is swallowed up in victory. Thus they are a first fruit to God and the Lamb.

THE TWO WITNESSES.

The eleventh chapter of the Revelation assumes much that has been already spoken of. "The Week" now begins. We therefore read of the temple, that is, the holy, not the most holy, place, and of those who worship in it; these are the 144,000 now in the glorious land, and against whom the beast has no power; for they overcome him. We read also of the outer court, where was the brazen altar, and of the worshippers therein, that is, of the saints scattered through the dominions of Antichrist. And, lastly, we read of the Gentiles, the worshippers of the Antichrist, to whom the court is given up, and of the holy city, and its being trodden under foot. St. John is told to measure, that is, to count, those who

worship in the temple. Their number is given, namely, 144,000, and they will readily be counted, for they are now in the new land. St. John is then told to take no account of the court, namely, the foolish virgins, the saints of the former churches of christendom, who had transgressed against the daily sacrifice, the figure of sanctification, and who, therefore, went into the great tribulation, for now they are to be slain by the beast, and to be trodden under foot by him for forty-two months. Here, therefore, we have two classes of the saints distinctly pointed out. The third class are the converts of the 144,000, converted from among all nations by the proclamation of the Gospel, represented by the mighty angel, when he cried with a loud voice as a lion roareth.

The two witnesses now appear in the person of Elijah. They are two in one; because the two are the king and the priest of the Mosaic covenant, which two offices were never united in the same person as they now are under the Christian covenant. The power of Moses and Elijah will therefore now be united in one and the same person, the Elijah of the last days. We have already considered him as the forerunner of the secret presence of Christ on earth, and have seen how he performed the work then given him to do. But now a very different duty awaits him; for to

the Antichristian nations he is now to prophecy in sackcloth, from the beginning to the middle of the last week of Daniel, that is, for 1,260 days. During this period the beast from the bottomless pit receives power from the dragon, and becomes the Antichrist, upon whom, at the word of Elijah, the plagues of the seven vials of wrath are poured, as once similar judgments were inflicted upon Pharaoh and upon Ahab. During the 1,260 days none can hurt the prophet; but when those days are ended, the beast from the pit will put him to death, perhaps in Antichristian Rome itself. At this the nations will rejoice; because by him they had been tormented with the seven plagues. After three days, however, he rises from the dead, and, like the Elijah of old, he ascends to heaven in the sight of his enemies, and enters the holy city on Mount Zion, where the Lamb is standing, and all who went in with Him to the marriage feast.

THE SECOND WOE.

It has been already said that the seven vials of wrath are poured out during the second prophecying of Elijah, and that the sixth trumpet (which is the second woe, the slaying of the Papists, the drying up of the river Euphrates), is sounded upon the pouring out of the sixth vial on the beast, towards the end of the 1,260 days of

Elijah's second prophecying. So in this eleventh chapter, having at verse 7 come to the end of the first half of the week, we read in verse 14 that "the second woe is past." The eighteenth chapter contains a full description of what immediately follows the second woe, namely, the complete annihilation of the Papal hierarchy. But though from the second woe some escape with their lives, yet they repent not of their deeds, nor cease to worship idols.

THE THIRD WOE.

The third woe, the destruction of the armies of the Antichrist in the glorious land, is now declared to be at hand.

At this time, the middle of the week, the King is on Mount Zion, and with Him stand the 144,000 in full glory. The beast has risen to the height of his power, and is now to make war with the saints, and to prosper, for forty-two months, that is, for the second half of the week. Also the 144,000, being on Mount Zion as kings, at once take possession of their universal kingdom. Therefore, we read in verse 15, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His anointed (people), and they shall reign for ever and ever." Therefore, now all the nations of the world outside the Antichrist, being

subject to Zion, bring the converts of the 144,000 into the glorious land. At this the nations of the Antichrist are angry, as we read in verse 18, and they imagine a vain thing. First they tread the outer court of the holy city, which is given into their power; so that for forty-two months they persecute, imprison, and slay, the saints among them, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus. But at the end of the week, when the time is come for the dead to be judged, God's servants to be rewarded, and for the destroyers of the earth to be themselves destroyed, the Antichristian host invade the glorious land. There the third woe is fulfilled in their utter destruction.

THE TEMPLE OPENED.

Last of all we read, in Revelation xi. 19, that the temple of God was opened. But if so, it was that some might enter in. From chapter xv. 5-8, we learn that when the seven angels came out having the seven last plagues, the temple was filled with smoke, so that no one was able to enter into it till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled. Now these vials of wrath were poured out whilst Elijah was prophesying. So these vials being now poured out, we read that the temple is again open. It was, then, so

opened that they to whom the privilege belonged might enter. The persons thus favoured are the 144,000; as we learn from Revelations xiv. 1. (See also Isa. xxvi. 3; Ps. cxviii. 19-25; Matt. xxi 42, 43, 44.)

THE SUN-CLOTHED WOMAN.

The eleventh chapter of the Revelation has carried us through the whole of Daniel's week. Therefore we must again return, for the twelfth chapter takes us back to the termination of the marriage feast, during which the 144,000 began to be glorified. So they come forth from the feast clothed with the sun. At this point of time the sixth seal has just been opened, the old heavens and land of Eden have passed away, and the new creation is completed; the new Jerusalem has also come down out of heaven; and there the Son of David is seated on His throne. The first five trumpets have been sounded, and the great tribulation has come to an end. This, then, being the time of Christ's power, His people are to be willing, so that those now to be converted and added to the Church are to be as the drops of the morning dew. "The Lord gives the word, great is the company of the preachers." They are all "as white as snow in Salmon." Great is their success; for the 144,000 on coming forth from

the feast, where, like Moses with the Word upon the mount, they received Christ's commandments, go forth as missionaries to the whole world. "A little one among them becomes a thousand, and a small one a strong nation;" and that not after years of labour, but suddenly; for they are the Zion of whom it is said, "Before she travailed she brought forth; before her pain came she was delivered of a man-child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or, shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children" (Isa. lxvi. 7, 8). So in Revelation xii. 1, 2, this very Zion is represented as a woman about to become a mother. Such a measure of the Spirit has been imparted to her that she appears as clothed with the sun. Upon her head is a crown of twelve stars. These are leaders; and so great is their glory that it is not eclipsed even by the woman's sun-like brightness. She is said to travail in birth, and to bring forth a man-child. This is no other than the innumerable multitude of chapter vii. 9-17, among whom are all Israel saved. These are all caught up to God and to His throne without seeing death. They do not, like the other part of "her seed," the saints of old christendom, who went into the great tribulation, suffer death at the hands

of the Antichrist; yet they are in danger of destruction; for the dragon stands before the woman to devour her children as soon as they are born; yet he cannot hurt one of them. They remain safe in their respective countries till the middle of the week, when their spiritual mother ascends Mount Zion. Then the kingdom of the world becomes hers; so all the nations combine to bring these innumerable sons of Zion to their own glorious land. There they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple; and there the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, feeds them, and leads them to living fountains of waters; and God wipes away all tears from their eyes. (See Isa. xlix. 8-13; liv. 11-14.)

Thus we see clearly who are the great multitude of chapter vii., of whom in passing it was said only that they were the converts of the sealed ones.

Immediately after the man-child is born there is war in heaven, that is, a war between spiritual powers. Ranged on one side will be Michael and his angels, that is, Elijah and the 144,000, who are scattered over the whole world: on the other side will be the devil and all the host whom he set free from the pit. This war is the evil day spoken of in Ephesians vi. 13. That evil day has not yet come upon the Church. She is not yet

equal to it. Therefore the host of hell are not yet let loose against her, but are still confined in prison. In the last days, however, the principalities and powers of darkness are to be loosed for the purpose, first of tormenting men during the great tribulation; and secondly, of waging war against Elijah and the sealed and glorified ones, if haply they may overcome them, as Satan overcame Adam in paradise. Therefore when the glorified part of the Church is about to take possession of the glorious land, the struggle is not to be against men in flesh in blood, as it was with Israel under Joshua: but to them the conflict is to be against the princes, against the potentates, against the world-wide rulers of the present darkness, against the spiritual powers of wickedness in the heavenly places. The hosts of the Lord must therefore, in that fearful struggle, be men full-grown in spiritual stature, and so able to take to themselves the whole armour of God, that they may be fitted to withstand in that evil day; and having fully accomplished all, to stand. Like, therefore, as Joshua and his army triumphed over the Canaanites, and took possession of the typical Canaan, so will Michael and his angels be victorious over the powers of darkness, and enter into the possession of the true, the heavenly country. Thus as the Canaanites were cast out of the earthly land by Israel, so will Satan be cast out of the

heavenly places where he now triumphs. "Therefore rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them: but woe to the inhabitants of the earth; for the devil then comes down among you having great wrath; because he now knows that he hath but a short time."

But the devil, finding that in war he has no spiritual power over the woman, stirs up a persecution against her, wheresoever she is found. To her, however, are given two wings of the great eagle, that she may fly to the land which has been prepared for her, for which she has fought so hard, and into which the devil is not permitted to enter. His place is no more found, either in the new land, or the other heavenly regions; he is confined to the dominions of the Antichrist. Therefore in the glorious holy land the victors dwell away from the face of the serpent for 1,260 days, or the first half of the week; and there they are fed on the fruits of the land, which are once more excellent and comely, as they were of old in Paradise, the garden of God. At the same time their converts among the nations are equally free from the serpent's presence.

But as we have already seen, the leader of the victorious army is like Moses; he goes not with the host into the new land. Whilst they dwell there in glory, he must be clothed in sackcloth, and again prophecy for 1,260 days among the

nations of the Antichrist, as we read in Revelation xi. 3.

While, however, the woman is flying into her place, Satan makes an attempt to overwhelm her: he casts out of his mouth water as a river, that he may cause her to be carried away by it. But as Pharaoh and his host were swallowed up as they pursued Israel to bring them back into Egypt, when God was bearing them as on eagles' wings to their land of rest, so now the earth opens her mouth and swallows up the river which the dragon casts out of his mouth after the woman. So she enters into the rest which has been so long awaiting the people of God.

Disappointed in his purpose, Satan will be enraged; and, as he has found that he cannot hurt either the woman or her child, he will depart from them to make war with the rest of her seed, those who once belonged to the old evangelical churches, and are dwelling in the various countries of former christendom, now antichristendom.

THE ANTICHRIST.

The consequences resulting to the nations of christendom from the victory of Michael and his angels over the dragon and his angels, and the complete escape of the woman into the wilderness, notwithstanding the efforts of the dragon to destroy

her, are most fearful. The dragon has thus learnt that now there is on the earth, in active exercise, a power superior to that which he has there; and consequently that the time is come for his expulsion from the earth. He is therefore wroth; and in order that he may slay the rest of the woman's seed, and may still for a little while maintain his influence over his own, he puts forth his utmost power, and raises up the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, the last and greatest of the antichrists, in the worship of whom all will combine, whose names were not from the foundation of the world written in the Lamb's book of life. The prophetic history of the Antichrist is found in Revelation xiii. and xvii; also in Daniel vii. 8, 11, 20-26, viii. 23-25, ix. 27, and xi. 29-45.

The two chapters, Revelation xiii. and xvii., lead us to retrace our steps as far back as the time of St. John, when the Roman empire was under its sixth head. This head was in due time to be wounded to death, and the empire was to become the beast that was not. Under those circumstances the seventh, or Papal, head was to spring up. History has shown how it was necessary that this head should continue for awhile. On all the seven heads was the name of blasphemy. Nothing else is said of any of the first six heads, except that one of them, that is, the sixth, should be wounded to death, and afterwards revive, and that this revived

head should be an eighth. This eighth head is the first beast of Revelation xiii., and is the now restored Roman empire, which suddenly came into existence while the winds were striving upon the great sea. This beast is one of the great subjects of those prophecies which relate to the last days. With the Roman emperors it ceased to be; and it "was not" till the year A.D. 1870. But in the meantime a new power, forming a seventh head, arose and sat upon the beast while its civil life was in abeyance. This new power was the union of the priesthood with royalty. Thus an ecclesiastical sovereignty occupied the place of the extinct imperial government, till, in A.D. 1870, the latter, returning to life, deposed the priesthood from the throne which it had so long and so unnaturally filled. This seventh, or ecclesiastical head, is fully described in Revelation xvii. and xviii., where its utter destruction by the beast, and the two horns who receive power one hour with the beast, is also clearly set forth.

If this interpretation be correct, we have now before our own eyes the fulfilment of a most important prophecy; the deadly wound of the beast is healed. So deadly had been the wound that no one ever anticipated that it could be thus so completely healed, that the beast should, as it were, rise out of the abyss, or hades. But even now, in order to constitute it the Antichrist of the last days, the

dragon must give to this eighth head his own power, and throne, and great authority. For this, however, there is as yet no need. Under present circumstances the devil can keep mankind, and the majority of the Church too, in complete subjection to himself by the prospect of a little of the wealth and honour of the world, or by the gaudy show and sensuous music of a ritualistic form of worship, or by the promise of priestly pardon. But when the 144,000 come forth from the marriage supper, clothed in the glory of Christ, and in sevenfold pentecostal grace and gifts, so that by the power of the Spirit in her all Israel are saved, the foolish virgins restored to the Church, and a countless number of the heathens suddenly converted, yea, and Satan and all his host defeated in the war in heaven, then the dragon, in order still to retain his captives in his grasp, gives his own power, and throne, and great authority to the eighth head of the beast. Thus he persuades the Papists and apostatizing Protestants that the Man of Sin, thus inspired by himself, is their Messiah. They believe the lie which the Man of Sin utters; they admire, they worship him, and, like an ox to the slaughter, they are at last led by him to their own destruction, in the brightness of Christ's second coming.

The moment when the woman clothed with the sun escaped from the dragon and fled into the

wilderness is the point of time from which the dates, or rather the numbers mentioned in prophecy, are to be reckoned. It is then that the last week of Daniel commences. It consists of seven years, or two periods of three and a half years, or 1,260 days each; the whole amounting to 2,520 days. The duration of the Antichrist, from the time of his receiving dragonic power to the end of the war with the saints, is 2,300 days. Therefore, if we reckon backwards from the end of the week, when that war ceases, we shall find that the beast receives his Antichristian power 220 days after the woman has reached the wilderness, the time when the week begins. By the middle of the week he has risen to the full height of his power; and then it is given to him to act as he pleases, "to practice and to prosper" for forty-two months, that is, during the second half of the week. His first act is to slay the two witnesses who had been prophesying against him during the time of his rising into power, and who had brought the seven plagues upon him. After that, until the end of the week, he makes war with the saints, who, for their transgression against the daily sacrifice, are given into his hand; though now they are keeping the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus. In this war the beast overcomes, that is, slays them.

During this war with the saints, the sealed ones

are with the Lamb on Mount Zion; and their heathen converts, and all Israel, are dwelling safely in the new land, which lately was a wilderness, but is now brought back from its desolation, and are feeding on the fruits of paradise restored. These converts the beast cannot slay; they overcome him. Therefore he opens his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, written on the foreheads of those on Mount Zion; His tabernacle, of which, in Isaiah iv. 5, 6, and in Revelation vii. 15, we read that it is spread over those dwelling in the glorious land, of whom it may be said, that they dwell in heaven. But it is given him to make war with the saints who are amongst the Antichristian nations, and to overcome them; and "power is given him over all the kindreds, and tongues, and nations" of old christendom. "And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the slain Lamb from the foundation of the world." But many out of all nations are written in that book, in order that they may be among that vast multitude who will be inhabitants of the earth during the millennium. Also a great multitude even of those within the dominions of the beast will not worship him: nor will they approve his cruel persecution. They therefore afford to the saints, the brethren of Christ, all the shelter and assistance in their power; they will give meat to

the hungry, and drink to the thirsty; they will receive the stranger, and clothe the naked; they will minister to the sick, and visit those who are in prison. Thus, while the saints fall by the sword and by flame, and by captivity, for many days, they will, as Daniel says, "be holpen with a little help." Their persecution is thus spoken of in Revelation xiii. 10: "Whoso is for captivity, goeth into captivity: whoso is to be slain by the sword, by the sword must he be slain. Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints." And again, in chapter xiv. 12, 13: "Here is the endurance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead who from this time forth die in the Lord: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works follow them." So fierce is this persecution, that by the end of the week the power of the holy people, as Daniel calls them in chapter xii. 7, is completely scattered. Many Psalms also speak of this closing persecution of the saints of God. Those, however, which refer to it more particularly are Psalms x., xliv., lxxiv., lxxix., lxxx., lxxxiii., and xciv., which seem written for the special use and comfort of those who shall then be thus persecuted.

In Revelation xiii., as in Daniel viii. 8-12, 23-25, we have also a description of another

beast which comes up out of the earth, having two horns like a lamb, but speaking as a dragon. To the first beast great power is given: the second beast seems to be endowed with wisdom, so as to know how to use the authority of the first beast; and he turns it to full account; for he causes them that dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast which had the deadly wound by the sword, and revived. He also it is who causes that they who worship not the image of the beast shall be killed; and that no one shall buy or sell who has not the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name, on his forehead, or on his right hand.

As all this is as yet unfulfilled, it would be presumption to attempt to enter minutely into the interpretation. We all hope to have nothing to do with this great evil, except to view its progress from a distance, that is, from our dwelling in the glorious land, and from the holy mount. We need not, therefore, be anxious to know at present more about the actions of the Antichrist than the words of Daniel, St. Paul, and St. John seem plainly to declare. We can clearly see that the two beasts are the means of bringing upon the nations of christendom the last judgments which are to come upon our age of the world. Christ warns us to watch and pray always, lest we be taken by surprise, and the last days come

upon us unawares, and so we, for a time, have part with the hypocrites and unbelievers in the coming judgments.

MOUNT ZION.

Revelation xiv., like the preceding chapter, is occupied with the events of the second half of the week. The Lamb has been long set on Mount Zion; but now they who went in with Him to the feast stand with Him on the mount in the fulness of their glory. A voice is heard from heaven as the sound of many waters, and as of great thunder. It is the voice of the 144,000 harping with their harps. They now sing the new song of full redemption, which none but themselves can sing. These are they who were not defiled with the other women, the foolish virgins, who transgressed against the daily sacrifice, not understanding the doctrine of Christian sanctification and consecration to the service of God. The harpers are the wise virgins. In their mouth was no false doctrine: they are blameless.

This part of the Church being on Mount Zion, in the city of the King are consequently kings. Therefore the time is near for the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which proclaims the establishment of God's everlasting kingdom over all nations.

Therefore an angel, a figure of that part of the Church which is then on Mount Zion in glory, is seen flying in mid-heaven, having the glad tidings of its immediate establishment to preach to every soul upon the earth. The Gospel which he declares is not our Gospel: for the whole sum and substance of it is in these words: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him who made the heaven, and the earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters."

Then another angel, also representing the saints on Mount Zion, follows, telling the nations why Babylon had fallen, saying, "She fell, she fell, because she made all nations partake in her iniquities."

And a third angel follows, proclaiming the wrath of God against any that worship the beast, who is now in the height of his power, persecuting and overcoming the saints through all the nations under his influence. And then it is added: "Here is" (that is, this is the time of) "the endurance of the saints who keep the commands of God and the faith of Jesus."

In verse 14 we hear of the results of the preaching of the first of the three flying angels. The harvest of the earth is reaped; that is, all the nations are brought under the direct rule of our Lord, and of His anointed people. The time is soon after the

middle of the week. One like the Son of Man sits upon a cloud, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. The one who sits on the cloud is the 144,000 reigning in glory. An angel comes out of the temple, or holy city, with a command from Christ to His glorified servants to reap the harvest of the earth. And the earth is reaped. The reign of Christ is therefore now established over all nations, except those belonging to the Antichrist: and the seventh trumpet at once proclaims the fact, that "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His anointed ones, and that they shall reign for ever and ever."

All the earth being thus under the sceptre both of Christ and the Church on Mount Zion, the nations go up to the holy city to worship the Lord. But as the converts of the 144,000 are still among them, the nations at once combine together to bring these sons of Zion with triumph into their own land. Thither accordingly they are conveyed; there they dwell in safety; and there the Lamb feeds them, so that they hunger no more, nor thirst any more. (See Isa. xlix. 22, 23; lx. 8, 9; lxvi. 20.)

By this the nations of Antichrist are enraged. At length they tumultuously assemble, and are gathered together at Armageddon; for another angel comes out of the temple with authority

from Christ, and having a sickle wherewith to do His work. But he waits for the command to act. At length an angel comes forth and commands him to gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, because her grapes are fully ripe. Therefore the angel gathers the vine of the earth, and casts it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. He treads not the press; but we are told that it is trodden without the city. So those represented by the clusters of the vine of the earth are gathered into the glorious land, there to be trodden by the armies in heaven, who on white horses follow the Lamb as He comes forth from the city in manifested glory for the destruction of His enemies: and blood comes out from the winepress even to the bits of the horses, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

THE SEVEN VIALS.

Revelation xiv. has thus given a portion of the history of the second half of the week. But chapters xv. and xvi. relate almost exclusively to the first half of the week, the time of Elijah's prophesying in sackcloth. In chapter xv. we read that St. John saw within the temple the seven angels who have the seven last plagues, which God will inflict on the nations, to move them, if possible, to repentance. Then we read of a sea

of glass, by which are standing those who overcome the beast. These are the 144,000. They are now in the glorious land; and as at the time here indicated they are about to enter the temple, the eternal city on the new Mount Zion, they must wash themselves at the sea of glass. Also they have now the harps of God; for they have just escaped from the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth, but which the opening earth swallowed up; so they sing the victory song of Moses and the Lamb; and in it they anticipate the time when all the nations shall come into the land where they are, and worship before the Lord.

And now the temple in heaven is opened, and the same angels having the seven plagues come forth. The temple, or city, is then filled with smoke, and no one is able to enter into it till the seven plagues are finished. But when that is done, the temple is again opened, and the harpers who have stood by the sea of glass ascend Mount Zion, enter the city, and stand there with the Lamb.

Little need be said about the seven plagues, which are poured out while Elijah is prophesying during the first half of the week; for probably they will be fulfilled as literally as possible. One evident figure, the river Euphrates, has been already spoken of. Under the sixth vial, in connection with the sixth trumpet, the papacy is deprived of the majority of its supporters; and then, on the

pouring out of the seventh vial, the Papal hierarchy are utterly destroyed by the beast and the ten horns. These horns are probably the kings from the eastern empire, not the Papal sovereigns of Europe, for these latter lament over Babylon's fall. Thus the papacy is exterminated before the middle of the week, and before the beast attains to his full power. At this time the commotion in antichristendom is indescribable. There is a great earthquake, such as never was since man was upon the earth. The great city of the Antichrist is divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fall. Every island flees away, and the mountains are not found. A great hail, as of a talent in weight, comes down upon men; therefore they blaspheme God because of the hail; for the plague of it is exceeding great.

THE WAR WITH THE LAMB.

But the plagues cease. The time of the prophesying of Elijah comes to an end, and he is put to death by the beast. At this the nations rejoice, and the Antichrist is everywhere triumphant for forty-two months.

The harpers by the sea of glass ascend Mount Zion, and enter the reopened temple. They take the kingdom of the world, and the seventh trumpet immediately proclaims the joyful event

The nations now come up to the mountain of Jehovah, bringing the sons of Zion with them. In the glorious land these converts dwell until the Second Advent. God spreads his tabernacle over them, so that the sun smites them not, nor any heat. They walk in the light of the city, and ever and anon there comes from heaven the sound as of many waters, and as of a great thunder. It is the voice of the harpers harping with their harps, as they sing the new song before the throne; a song which none as yet can learn, but the 144,000 now redeemed from the earth, a first-fruit to God and the Lamb.

But while it is thus in the glorious land, and all the nations are rejoicing in the kingdom of God, the war with the saints is carried on wheresoever the beast reigns. Yet at length the war ceases, for by the end of the week the power of the holy people is scattered. At length, too, Daniel's last week is ended, and the time is come for the beast to make war with the Prince of princes. Having put Elijah to death, and slain the saints, he thinks to make away with those who dwell in the light of the holy city. Therefore he makes war with the Lamb, leads his hosts to Armageddon, planting the tents of his palace towards the glorious holy mountain. But within the thirty days which bring us to the end of the 1,290 days of Daniel xii. 11, the heaven is opened, and He that is called

Faithful and True appears out of Mount Zion, with the armies of heaven, the 144,000 glorified ones, and they tread the winepress into which the armies of the beast and of the many kings of the earth are cast (Ps. cx.). Also the head of the Antichristian confederacy, and his false prophets, are taken, and are cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

Forty-five days more complete the 1,335 days of Daniel xii. 12, the end of which is the moment when many of them who sleep in the dust of the earth are to awake. Therefore the Lord Jesus descends from the heights of the heavenly Zion. The 144,000 glorified ones, and all the host of angels, are descending with Him. And now the voice of the archangel is heard, together with the trump of God. The dead in Christ arise. Among them are patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs; those who had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God; and those also who had been slain because they would neither worship the beast, nor his image, nor receive his abominable mark. Then the saints living in the glorious land are changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and all, a mighty host, are caught up together to meet the

Lord in the air, to be with Him where He is, and to reign with Him in glory for ever.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS.

Thus the Lord Jesus descends to the earth with the whole concourse of saints and angels. Before Him are assembled all the living nations, among many of whom the beast had exercised his power. But he could not compel all of any nation to worship him, and to join in carrying out his persecuting edicts. Some, then, during the war with the saints, had done their utmost to succour them, but too many, alas! had let them suffer unaided, and unpitied. Therefore the judgment of these two classes proceeds, according to the account given in Matthew xxv. 31-46. Those on the right hand of the Judge go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.

THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM.

And now the kingdom of Christ and the saints being fully established, the thousand years begin. So, as all enemies are subdued under the feet of Jesus, He, with all His attendant saints and angels, reascends Mount Zion, and delivers up to the Father the universal kingdom over which He had reigned supreme, that God may be all in all.

At the end of the first thousand years of the millennial state, the peace of the kingdom is interrupted by the rebellion of Gog and Magog, and their hostile invasion of the glorious land. But fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them. After this the kingdom proceeds in an uninterrupted course of holiness for ever and ever.

THE SECOND RESURRECTION.

One event, however, yet remains to be spoken of. As soon as the rebellion of Gog and Magog is suppressed, "the rest of the dead are raised." The sea gives up the dead which are in it; and death and hades deliver up the dead which are in them, that they may be judged, each one according to his own works. Then the dead, the small and great, stand before God. The books are opened, and the dead are judged out of those things which are written in the books. And death and hades are cast into the lake of fire. And whoso was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

CONCLUSION.

The things which are written in the prophets are the true sayings of God. If through the grace of God the Scriptures have in the preceding notes

been rightly interpreted, it is evident that, on this very earth, and before what is commonly called the Second Advent, there is yet reserved the keeping of a sabbath for the people of God. This rest, hen, takes place during the last week of Daniel; and it is the confirmation of the eternal covenant with many. These many are the 144,000. They rest during the first half of the week in the new land itself; but in the middle of the week they ascend Mount Zion, and are there with the Lamb till the end of the week, when He appears in glory for the overthrow of the Antichristian host who have invaded His land. Let us therefore be diligent to enter into that rest, lest we also fall into the same example of disobedience into which all the generations which have gone before have hitherto fallen. But rather may there be fulfilled to us the prayer of the Psalmist:

"Save us, O Jehovah, our God, and gather us from among the nations, to give thanks unto Thy holy name, and to triumph in Thy praise" (Ps. cvi. 47).

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